This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

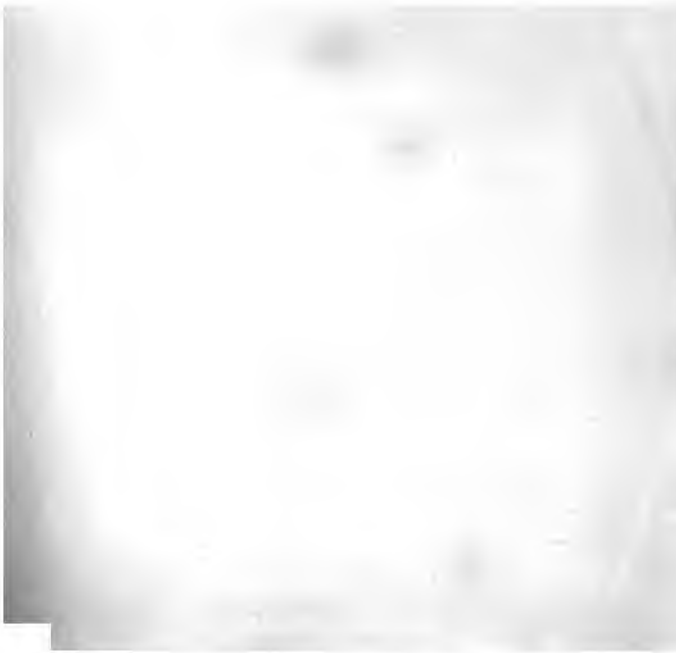
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



LADY MACLAIRN

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. HUNTER,

OF NORWICH,

AUTHOR OF LETITIA; THE UNEXPECTED LEGACY; THE HISTORY OF THE GRUBTHORPE FAMILY; PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS, &c. &c.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W. EARLE AND J. W. HUCKLEBRIDGE;

AND SOLD BY W. EARLE, NO. 47, ALBEMARLE STREET; GEORGE ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER ROW; B. CROSBY AND CO. STATIONERS' COURT; THOMAS OSTELL, AVE-MARIA LANE; AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1806.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

249. n. 47.

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey.

LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

CHAP. I.

AGAIN must the reader be contented with my pen, in order to supply the interrupted course of Miss Cowley's letters.

From the period already described the lovers were left to their own discretion, and the direction of Counsellor Steadman; who, availing himself of Mr. Sinclair's information, decidedly supported them in their attachment; and, in the words of the fond father, "be-

came a teacher of doctrines, which had silenced his authority, if they had not convinced his conscience." As this was said with an acquiescent smile, it was understood. Besides this no other consequence resulted from Mr. Sinclair's letter, as Miss Cowley gave her lover to understand, that she meant not to marry till Mr. Flamall's power had ceased. She urged this point with her usual disinterested spirit. "I will be mistress of myself and my fortune," said she, "and manifest to the world my own judgment, in selecting a man worthy of both. I can be as proud as Mr. Hardcastle, and I can have my scruples: my husband shall not lose an ample inheritance, because a girl is impatient to bear his name. We shall be happy; in the mean time, you my Horace are engaged in the sacred duties of friendship: persevere, and rest assured of Rachel Cowley's faith and love."

It is to be regretted, that, from motives

of delicacy, Mr. Hardcastle's letters are not permitted to appear; and I cannot but lament that so fair an opportunity escapes me of confuting an opinion, so boldly and erroneously asserted, that "a man in love must write like a fool." Had no impediment been opposed to my wishes, I could have produced incontestible proofs, that love and nonsense have no natural affinity. Horace Hardcastle's understanding was neither enslaved by beauty, nor the dupe of a youthful inclination; nor was Miss Cowley the child of vanity. Rhapsody and fancy were equally useless to their rational views and virtuous attachment. The hope of meriting each other's esteem imparted to their language the simplicity of truth and the unstudied graces of nature. The tribute of Horace's admiration was directed to the cultivating the taste and forming the judgment of the woman he loved; and Miss Cowley, with a well-grounded

confidence in his *principles*, as well as in his superior advantages in learning, assiduously profited from the lessons of a guide too honest to betray, and too quick-sighted to be betrayed.

Rational love-letters, in a novel, might, perhaps, with some sort of readers, have been deemed an equivalent for the absence of the marvellous; and sensible as I am and must be of the deficiency of my work in this respect, I have urged my request with persevering importunity, although without success. To my plea, that Mr. Hardcastle's letters would, at least, give *novelty* to my *novel*, I am told, that a lover with his eyes open would be the disgrace of a circulating library, and the utter ruin of the writer's fame as a novelist; and in reply to the obvious defect of a work stripped of its essential support, I am advised humbly to request my young female readers, to supply this deficiency by reading their own billet-doux, which,

I am assured, will give all the interest to the work so anxiously desired. "Be contented with the title of a faithful historian, though perhaps to some, a dull story teller," added Mr. Hardcastle. "You have, in my opinion, said enough of your heroine to convince your readers that she could not love a fool or a coxcomb. Leave me to the enjoyment of this conviction. I am as little qualified for the hero of a popular novel, as you are for writing a fashionable one. With the materials before you, you may produce an offering to common sense; but my letters would neither lull to sleep a craving imagination, nor excite the sensibility of any 'Miss Lydia Languish.' They were dictated by truth and sincerity, and addressed to a reasonable being. My glory is confined to one conclusion; and the conqueror of worlds is unenvied! Horace Hardcastle was beloved by a virtuous woman; and that woman was Rachel Cowley! Surely this will satisfy your read-

ers! If it does not, I pity them; nor can your honest heart reform them." I gave up the contest; for his manly face glowed with conscious worth, and contented ambition. Having again found the thread of my narrative, I once more re-assume my pleasing task.

LETTER XXXII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

LETTERS are arrived, my dear Lucy, from our island. Fortunately, I was at the Abbey when they were read at the hall. I rejoice that it so happened, for I am yet but a novice in counterfeiting; and you will judge that the contents of these letters required on my part a complete command of my features. On returning home to supper I found the Baronet alone, and his air more disturbed than I liked. "I am glad

you are returned," said he, with eagerness. "We have been very much surprised to-day; and Miss Flint is seriously indisposed by the intelligence we have had from Jamaica. The history of the secret marriage followed. Lady Maclairn," continued he, "entreats you will excuse her appearing to-night. She is much displeased with her son's conduct in the course of this business. She thinks he has been deficient on the point of honour with you. He ought to have proclaimed his engagement the moment he heard of Mr. Cowley's intentions in his favour."—"He acted from an opinion much more delicate," replied I, "for he gave me credit for sentiments corresponding with his own, and he judged perfectly right in leaving to Mr. Flamall a business of his own forging, and in which we had nothing to do. But," continued I, "from your statement of this affair as it relates to Mr. Philip Flint, there appears but little for regret. His brother approves of his choice

you say?"—"Yes," replied the Baronet, "he speaks warmly in praise of the lady; and the romance is likely to finish better than most of those in which Cupid is prime minister. Even his mother would be satisfied with the *denouement*: were she left to herself; but Mr. Flamall is offended, and we dare not be placable." Sir Murdoch coloured. I smiled, and observed that he would be polite, and bend to the rising fortune of his nephew. "You do not yet know him," answered he with agitation. "Indeed I do," answered I with gaiety, "and had I known his nephew, we would have effectually cured him of match-making by our joint labours. I am only angry that I have had so little share in his present defeat." The conversation next turned on Miss Flint's vexation and grief, of which we both erroneously judged as it will appear hereafter.

In the morning, the incomprehensible Lady Maclairn appeared with a face as pale

as death, and with solemnity of manner, though with great composure, she thus addressed me. "It is with much satisfaction, my dear Miss Cowley, that I am able to recall to my memory my perfect submission to your request and Sir Murdoch's wishes. I have not importuned you on the subject of my son's pretensions. I rejoiced at the prohibition, which pleased me as much as yourself. I was not a stranger to my brother's ambitious and sanguine prospects for his nephew; but it was not so clear to me that Philip would always remain docile to his projects. The late event has convinced me that I judged rightly. And all I have now to wish is, that my son's mode of effecting his happiness may turn out better than the schemes of his uncle." "Never doubt it, madam," said I eagerly; "at any rate he will be happy for a season, and that is more than his uncle could make him. But what says Miss Flint to this love match?" "She has shown her affection on this occasion," replied her Ladyship.

"My brother, by his violent invectives, has raised an antagonist where he expected an auxiliary. She is more offended by Mr. Flamall's resentment than by her brother's imprudence, and only laments his not having confided to her the secret of his heart. She foresees that Oliver Flint's kindness and generosity will give him claims unfriendly to her wishes; and she deplores the loss of her favourite, as fatal to her hopes. I have, as usual, suppressed my feelings on this subject. I was never judged competent to the concerns of this child's establishment in the world. I bless God that he has escaped the pernicious consequences of being made of too much importance. If he be happy, I shall be satisfied." She drew her son's letter from her pocket: it was like most of those which are written on such occasions. The old man's pleased me better; it is addressed to Miss Flint, and exhibits a cheerful mind and a benevolent heart. He begs her good offices to reconcile Lady Maclairn's to the marriage,

and adds that Philip, by his timidity and secrecy, had lost one child which might have been saved, and with him, that was his greatest fault; for that he had got a wife who pleased him, and every other friend, except Mr. Flamall; "but I shall take care," adds he, "to settle that gentleman's future controul over my children. You would be as fond of the little wife as we are, my dear Lucretia," continues the good man, "if you knew her; she is a pretty, amiable creature, and has won my heart already. I trust I shall live to share the happiness to which I have been useful. Philip is a worthy lad, and he is my peculiar care: have no fears for him, for he is able to walk alone, we want no *tutors*. So you may tell Mr. Flamall, if you please: and Philip's mother may rest satisfied that his conduct is such as reflects no dishonour on his character. I could say more, but it is needless. We are all happy at present, thanks to Providence!"

I observed that Mr. Oliver Flint's letter was a satisfactory one. "Certainly," replied she, "as far as it goes; but there is yet secrecy in the business, and with me concealment portends danger." She was summoned to Miss Flint, who is still much indisposed. I am going to ramble with the Baronet.

(*In continuation.*)

—Last night after supper Lady Maclairn again brought forward her son's marriage, "I could have wished," said she, turning to me, "that Philip had been more explicit in regard to his engagements with his uncle. I cannot but think he was very wrong in permitting my brother, for an instant, to entertain the hopes he did; and however these hopes stood removed from every chance of succeeding, yet I am certain that Mr. Flamall will be painfully affected by a concealment, which he will judge an indelible disgrace on Philip's honour.

He certainly ought to have prevented his uncle's entertaining the prospects he has done." "I will have no judgment passed on *my lover*," replied I, with unaffected gaiety; "all stratagems are lawful under unusurped power; and till I can discover a better reason for my censure than his keeping his own secrets, I shall esteem Mr. Philip Flint." "I have, however, often reflected," said Sir Murdoch, "that in these secret engagements, there is one danger which is rarely insisted on. We can expatiate on the evils of what are justly called imprudent marriages, and inconsiderate connexions; but we seldom think of the deviations from the road of truth which they necessarily force the unwary to tread. The plots and contrivances, the duplicity and deceit, which ordinarily enter into a youthful intrigue, are in my opinion more serious evils, than the difficulties so commonly annexed to a *love match*, as such clandestine engagements are called. The

native innocence and rectitude of the mind is broken into; deceit is become familiar, and has been found useful to the purpose of the passions; and it ought not to surprise any one, that a young man, or a young woman, who has attained the desired object by the road of contrivance and imposition, should continue to profit by their acquaintance with them, whenever it suits their views or inclinations."

Never shall I forget the countenance of Lady Maclairn! She had her eyes fixed, and her brows elevated; her breath was short, and her colour forsook her, but as it appeared in spots on her bosom. God knows whether I judged right, but I hesitated not a moment. I rose abruptly, and brushing her neck with my hand, I said, "It is not a spider." She made no reply, but drank some water from the glass before her. Malcolm, praising my courage, and gently reproving his mother's dread of so harmless an insect, insisted on her drinking

some wine. She complied, and in a tone of ill-affected gaiety drank to her *deliverer:* and I am persuaded, Lucy, that for the moment *I was her deliverer.* Mrs. Allen observed her extreme distress as well as myself, and our reasonings are endless. We know not the heart of Lady Maclairn! Receive the affectionate farewell of mine which you do know, in all its weaknesses and wanderings.

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XXXIII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

So so! Ethusiasm has her votaries, I find, even at Heathcot! Let me see: you say in your last, "my father entirely agrees with you, my dear Rachel, that Miss Howard is not an object for the libertine's rude gaze, nor for the assaults of an unfeeling world." "You have not been more generous than discriminating, &c." Mr. Sedley, too; well,

what does Mr. Sedley think of this girl? Why, that "the casket is worthy of the pure gem it incloses;" and then comes the *sober* praise of Lucy Hardcastle, "Mary Howard is nature's master-piece." I am satisfied, and leave you to decide on my talents for hyperbole. Did I not tell you that I was describing *something* more worthy of my pen than beauty?—but I will spare you.

I suppose Eliza, sends you the parish news. Has she informed Mary of the direful effects which the death of Mrs. Snughead, and the recent advice of the good health and expected arrival of her son and heir have produced on her *inconsolable* husband? In spite of his *strait lacings* the gout found its way to his stomach, and he has had a very narrow escape. He has been advised to go to Bath; and we have got a curate, who will correct me in my late idle habit of breaking the Sabbath; for he is, I am told, a very ingenious and worthy young man.

Mrs. Warner in a walk with Mrs. Allen has unburdened her mind, and in her own words "she is out of all patience" to see her lady making herself miserable *for nothing*. "Her spirits were low enough before, for she had been well humbled, about Miss Mary," continued Warner, "and now she is quite broken hearted, poor soul! This marriage, Mrs. Allen, will be the first nail in my poor lady's coffin." "Why should you think so?" observed Mrs. Allen. "His brother is pleased with the lady he has chosen, and all will be well." "This is what I tell her, Madam," replied the honest woman, "and besides that, I have ventured to say, that Mr. Flamall will not dare to tutor the young gentleman, now he is married and master of himself, as one may say, as he did here, and my lady acknowledged that was a comfort to her, although she could not see him. There is the rub, Madam; she doats upon this young man, and between our-

selves it is a great pity; for notwithstanding he is a very fine looking young gentleman, and a sweet tempered one to boot, yet there are, as I say, those as good, who want her money more than he does; for she tells me, he will have every shilling of Mr. Oliver's fortune, and that he has already given him a fine plantation, and I know not how many poor negroes. A good deed for them, poor souls! for Mr. Philip is a tender-hearted man." "It was, however, wrong to enter into an engagement of this sort, without consulting his friends," observed Mrs. Allen; "and still worse, not to confess his marriage before he quitted his family." "To be sure it was," answered she, "but if you knew the temper of his uncle, it would not surprise you. He contrived to be master here, though every one feared and hated him." "Not Miss Flint," said Mrs. Allen, smiling: "I have been told he was a favourite with her." "So have I an hundred

times," replied Warner; "but her love was worn out, before I came to the hall, and that is nine years ago. No, no: it was always clear to me how he managed to keep his footing here. Whenever any dispute arose, and there was no lack of them, he used to threaten to take away Philip from the hall and carry him to America or France; and my Lady knowing he could do as he pleased with his poor dejected sister, was always afraid that he would take from her this darling and comfort of her life. I am no fool, Madam; and I can assure you that the world has been much mistaken in regard to Miss Flint's liking Mr. Flamall. She loves nothing, nor any one on earth but her brother Philip. This very morning she cried as though her heart was breaking; and said, all was lost to her. 'Why, my dear Madam,' said I,' you grieve more than his mother does; she hopes to see him again, and why should you despair?' She shook

her head and said, 'you know not, Warner, what I suffer.' Poor soul! I do know; but her fretting will never cure her grievance; and after all; you will acknowledge, Madam, that her complaint does not shorten life. To be sure, the unlucky blow she received when getting to her room, in the confusion which followed Miss Howard's fainting, has not mended matters; but time and patience may; and if she would be governed by me, and leave off that pernicious rum and water, she might get better; but between ourselves she yields more and more to the habit, and that only inflames the wound, and she suffers what would kill a horse. "She is happy at least in having so faithful a domestic as yourself near her," observed Mrs. Allen. "I believe she thinks so," answered the good creature, "for although she is an odd woman, and commonly thought a very bad tempered one, I have found her generous to me. She has been a disappointed

woman too that is certain; but I soon discovered that she knew who did their duty; and as I faithfully performed mine in the hope of being approved by a master, who knows no distinctions with his servants. I have neither feared her nor flattered her; my character will always support me; for I never lived but at the hall and with one other family, where I am sure of favour whenever I ask it. Sixteen years spent with lady Grenville will get me a place any hour of the day, though she is in her grave. "Varner yielded to her gratitude and affection, and the conversation, finished with the character of this lady. Adieu my friend! my sister! judge of my affection by that which thou cherishest for thy

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP. II.

LETTER XXIV.

From the same to the same.

BELIEVE me, my dear friend, the slight indisposition which that Chit Alien has magnified into a dangerous fever, was shorter in duration than the alarm she so incautiously produced at Heathcot. It is true that, in order to please Lady Maclairn and to satisfy my nurse, I submitted to the penance of keeping my bed for two days and have for some days since, been pent up in my own apartment. It does youth and vigour no harm, to have from time to time such gentle lessons as the one I have been taught, of the fallacy and fragility of life; but with the cordials of kindness and attention which I have received, the only remaining doubt is whether I shall think of it to

any purpose. Sir Murdoch, my first physician at present, or rather my only one, is accused of being like too many of his medical brethren, unwilling to pronounce the patient well, from his relish of his fee. But this is pure malice; and a scandal fabricated by Mrs. Heartley, out of revenge; because he preferred sharing with me a new book, to dining with her; alleging also, that as she had allured my nurse from her charge, it behoved him to watch me. You will do wisely, my dear Lucy, to consider the danger of this tremendous fever, during which Mrs. Allen leaves me to amuse herself. But these romantic girls! they so dearly love the pathetic, that they are never to be trusted with a plain tale. Now I, being a mere matter of fact correspondent; and who, in two lines, had I been permitted, would have told you that I had got a severe cold; now as frankly avow, that I have had a fever-fit, to the full as *pathetic* as any which

Allen's imagination pictured to you. But as it happens to be one of that sort which is contagious, I beg you to be prepared for a quick pulse, and an aching head, on perusing the enclosed narration. I have paid the tribute; and have calmed my spirits, by writing to my Horace. Adieu, *pour le présent.*

(*In Continuation*)

When Mrs. Allen left me, for her walk and her day's holiday, Sir Murdoch took his seat opposite to me. I was making some artificial flowers for Lady Maclairn's vases. The baronet was amused by seeing me, as he said "rival Flora;" and we chatted some little time over the work. At length his silence to a question of mine diverted my attention from my employment, and looking at him, I found he was fallen into one of his absent fits, and as usual, had his eyes fixed on me, with that expression of sadness so peculiarly touching. "Come, my good friend," said I with cheerfulness, "do not suppose I shall permit you to be

idle ; either take up the book, or wind this skain of silk for me." He smiled and took the silk. " Take heed you do not entangle it, " said I, assisting for a moment in the operation, " it is wofully ruffled." "It resembles more closely," replied he calmly, and proceeding cautiously in his task, "the web of my thoughts which you interrupted." But I had found the clue, that had made all smooth within, and with patience I shall succeed in *this* business.

"I was thinking, my dear Miss Cowley," continued he, "when you called me to order, of those means which Providence employs for its gracious purposes of mercy and deliverance, to beings like ourselves, who in the imperfect state in which we are placed, with all the reason of which so many boast, neither can provide for our own good, nor prevent a future evil : I was tracing the chain of events which in their consequences were appointed to heal my wounded mind ; and with these considerations, entered the

sense of my own short-sightedness, and opposition to the intended remedy; my repugnance to Mr. Flamall's offers of placing you here; the dread of seeing you; and the painful struggles I had in conquering my aversion to the journey to town. As these circumstances arose to my memory, I experienced the truth and vexation they had caused me; and I doubt not my countenance indicated to you that I was disturbed. But what will you think when I tell you, that the first view of you was to me accompanied with an anguish of soul unutterable, and which it makes me faint even to think of? Yet, my dear Miss Cowley, you were the angel of mercy sent to heal me, you spoke, you smiled, I heard your voice, the storm of conflicting sorrows was hushed, my soul was entranced in bliss; for I imagined that I saw before me my sainted Matilda. This lady was my early love, my affianced wife, the pride, the glory of my race! the object with which my life, my honour, and

my affection were inseparably connected! Listen to me," added he with solemnity, observing that I was disturbed, "your influence over me has not been effected by your attractive beauty: neither your understanding, your native cheerfulness, nor your tender compassion, would have reached my torpid heart and extinguished sensations. It was your resemblance to his portrait, Miss Cowley, that burst asunder the chains which had weighed me down, and that spoke peace to my harassed spirit." He drew from his bosom the miniature picture of a young lady; and presenting it to me added, that his wife had been surprised by my striking likeness to it. The painting was enamelled and highly finished; and the face was, to speak frankly, lovely. "I am disqualified for a judge," said I, examining it; "were it less beautiful, I might allow my vanity indulgence, and honestly confess, that, I think it does resemble a miniature of me, drawn when last

I was in London, for a friend; but this lady was a much fairer woman than I am." "Not as she appeared when I knew her," answered he, replacing the picture; "health and exercise had given such tints to her complexion as no colours I could employ were able to reach. How many times have I had reason to regret the attainment which gave to my aching eyes this faint memorial of her charms! Every time I surveyed this picture was a moment placed to the account of misery, till I saw you: but now it is my consolation to compare its features with yours. I know what you think, but in pity to my infirmity suffer me to enjoy the delusion, which lulls me to repose. You have no parents living. Let me call you *daughter*. Such, had heaven permitted our union, would have been Matilda's child; such, the image of herself, might she have bequeathed me, had"—He could not proceed; but bursting into tears he covered his face. "Call me by any title that

pleases you," said I; "none that you will give me can express more reverence and esteem than I have for you. But to render your daughter happy, you must be less susceptible to impressions so unfriendly to your health and comforts." "They have ceased to be afflictive," answered he; "for I can now say with Job, 'My sorrows came in upon me as a wide breaking in of waters; in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me; but my deliverer was at my right hand to save me.' His arm of mercy has been stretched out for me also, and 'I will praise him whilst I have my being.' But let me tell *my child* her *father's* story," added he pensively smiling.—"Another time," replied I, "will be better for us both." "Do you think so?" answered he with a sigh, "then it shall be so; but I should like you to know the man before you, and whom you permit to call you *daughter*. It would relieve my mind to give you a por-

tion of its burden." I could not refuse this appeal, and he proceeded.

HISTORY OF THE MACLAIRN FAMILY.

"My father," said Sir Murdoch, "was one of those men who could not abandon their unfortunate monarch in the year 1715, and he was one also of that faithful band who saw their own ruin in the fall of the Stuart line.

"He fled to France, after every hope was lost, and there he entered into a regiment chiefly composed of men like himself, and whose loyalty and courage have well recompensed the country which then sheltered and fed them. With the rank of captain, and an unsullied name, he soon after married a young lady, whose fortune was similar to his own. Her father was major in the same corps; but unable to bear the reverse of fortune, or borne down by the fatigues he

had encountered in the royal cause, he died, and left his daughter to a Maclairn"—Sir Murdoch rose, and paced the room—"I was the only fruit of this marriage," resumed he; "my mother I do not remember, for I was only three years old when my father lost this prop of his earthly comforts, but he taught me to revere her name.

"During the contest for dominion, to which I have already alluded, my uncle, Sir Alexander Maclairn, had with more prudence than *honour*, according to the opinion of the adherents to the unhappy Charles, remained for a time inactive, and at length declared himself openly the friend of the established government; but neither his zeal nor his services were further recompensed than by leaving him to the peaceable enjoyment of the wreck of the once prosperous fortune of his ancestors; namely, a castle falling to decay, and the remnant of the estate burdened with a heavy mortgage.

"Time had given stability to the British

monarch; and my uncle, desirous of seeing a brother whom he loved and secretly reverenced, employed such means as were necessary to restore my father to his native rocks with security. This intelligence was communicated to him, when I had just reached my nineteenth year, and Sir Alexander, with every argument that affection could suggest, finished his intreaties by reminding my father of his age and infirmities; and the duty they were mutually bound to perform before death closed their eyes. 'All that remains of our name,' added he, 'is 'in our children. My Matilda shall never lose the title of Maclairn; from her cradle she has been taught to love her cousin, and to your Murdoch do I look for a renovation of that race which it is your duty to perpetuate. Remember that these children are the last hope of an ancient and honourable house, which even in the obscurity of a sunken fortune will retain its place in the annals of true glory; for its sons were

brave and its daughters virtuous.' He blessed Providence for its interposition, which had opened his eyes to the folly and madness which the prince's adherents had fallen into, in their attempts to reinstate the proscribed Stuarts; 'and I now bless heaven,' added he, 'that by my moderation I have preserved an asylum for you and a home for our children.'

"My father, disgusted with a foreign service, and languishing to behold his native country, eagerly embraced my uncle's offers. He had long before this event determined that my path in life should not be that of a soldier, and he had with extreme caution repressed in me his own military spirit. I was educated by a Scotchman who had once been a minister of that Master whose religion is *peace*; my leisure hours were filled up by studies of retired ease and tranquillity; and painting and music were familiar to me.

"We were received by my uncle with un-

affected joy; and welcomed by a few faithful adherents to our family with those genuine demonstrations of good will and attachment so congenial to the noble and uncorrupted Highlanders. On beholding my cousin Matilda, I blushed as deeply from the consciousness of what had passed in my mind in relation to her, as from surprise on beholding this 'rustic' cousin embellished with all the graces of youth, beauty, and artless manners; and when with ingenuous simplicity she offered me her glowing cheek, her eyes beaming with joy and kindness, I felt that I was unworthy of her goodness. A few months were given to the domestic comforts of my uncle and father, and apparently for the purpose of rivetting my chains. My assiduities met with no check; and '*our children*' was the common epithet my uncle employed in speaking of us. A more explicit avowal of his wishes followed; and in this conversation Sir Alexander candidly acknow-

ledged that he was under pecuniary difficulties, and unable to establish me in life without some exertions on my part. My father, without knowing the pressure of his brother's difficulties in their full extent, not only saw the expediency, but the utility of my being employed, and he sent me to Aberdeen to study the civil law. During a year, which was thus passed without profit to me but as it led me to a further knowledge of the mathematics, my uncle had gained on my father to listen to his darling project as well as my own; and being offered for me an ensigncy in a regiment destined for Minorca, he gained his point, and I escaped from a pursuit I detested, that of the law. An additional debt was cheerfully incurred on the Maclairn's impoverished acres. My separation from Matilda was softened to me by her father's last words: 'Have ever before you this recompense,' said he, placing at the same time Matilda's hand in mine; 'she

will be always a *Maclairn*. Do you so conduct yourself as to return to us worthy of the name.' You will imagine, that my martial spirit was sunk when I received her embrace, and my poor father's blessing: I will not be tedious. During my three years' station at Minorca, I rose to the rank of lieutenant, and lost my father. From that period the cloud of adversity became more portentous. I was frustrated in my expectations of returning home, and receiving the reward I had so arduously strove to merit. But my uncle's ambition had been roused by the partiality of my friends, and he contrived to promote me at the expence of my happiness. I exchanged my post and regiment for one at Gibraltar, in which I ranked as captain. This disappointment of my hopes deeply affected my spirits, and Matilda had apparently shared with me in this trial of our patience. Her letters were more tender than cheerful, and she commonly finished by reminding me of

her determined faith and unutterable affection. Gracious God! my trust in thy power was not more solid than my faith in Matilda's truth!

"In the last letter she wrote me, and which is engraven on my memory, she finished *thus*:—'It soothes my depressed spirits, to call thee my wedded lord, and to sign myself thy wife. Are we not one, my Maclairn, in the sight of that Being who has witnessed our vows of truth, of honourable love? Are we not one, though seas and lands part us? Yes, and though worlds should interpose to divide us, we shall meet and be united as kindred spirits, as *one*, in the blessed state of perfect happiness, of permanent felicity. There at least will thy Matilda meet thee, and there will her Maclairn be comforted for his present disappointments.'

"Alas! Miss Cowley, the cloud had burst on my devoted head at the very moment I was unconsciously weeping over this letter,

as the precious proof of my security; though it was also as painful a proof of the state of Matilda's spirits. The indolence and pusillanimity of Sir Alexander Maclairn had always been leading traits in his character; these, with other circumstances, had placed him in the power of *a man*, who hated him, merely because his grandfather had served Sir Alexander's in a menial station. Industry had made this man's successors wealthy; and my uncle had, in his difficulties, applied to their more fortunate heir than himself, for money so repeatedly, that he was little more than the ostensible proprietor of his inheritance. His wary and greedy creditor had changed his tone; and frequent hints of the necessity of foreclosing the mortgage, unless my uncle could be more punctual in paying his stipulated interest, were, from time to time, thrown out with increasing seriousness and harshness. In a dilemma of this kind, the laird of Maclairn Castle received a visit

from his importunate neighbour, who introduced with much ceremony his only child, a young man, who had lived chiefly in the South with a rich tradesman, his uncle. Hospitality, as much as policy, induced my uncle to welcome the stranger; and the young man repeated his visit. The sight of my beauteous Matilda effected more; he became enamoured, and made his father his confidant. Secure of the estate, he now aspired to the daughter of *a Maclairn*, and without loss of time he proposed an alliance, which at once, as he observed, would settle all accounts between himself and Sir Alexander; his son not desiring a shilling with his daughter; and he added, that he would cancel every mortgage and bond on the day of their marriage. The weak old man listened to this infamous proposal; and Matilda received her father's commands to be favourable to her generous suitor. I will not detail to you the persecutions which resulted from her firm refusal.

The lover's father, irritated by her *obstinacy*, as he termed her *fortitude*, gave Sir Alexander to understand that he saw through the collusion, and that his daughter was taught her part by himself, in order to evade a connexion which his pride could not brook. Menaces followed; and he quitted the house, swearing that Sir Alexander should be roofless in a month. Intimidated by a threat which he well knew this man could effect, he became desperate in the means of avoiding it. The day of marriage was fixed, and Matilda was summoned from her prison chamber, to hear her fate from her father. She expostulated; he was deaf: she reminded him of his engagements with me; he sternly answered that she should not be a beggar; nor would he live to want bread; and bade her begone. 'Bless me before I go,' said she, meekly kneeling, 'send to me repose with a father's love.' The wretched parent, a stranger to the calmness of despair

when at its climax, and viewing her tearless eye and collected features through the medium of his own wishes, raised her with transports of joy from her suppliant posture, and pouring out his fervent benedictions on her, he advised her to return to her apartment and compose her mind for the reception of her future husband and his father, who would, in the evening, convince her of the value they set on the alliance. She replied that she preferred a walk in the garden, and withdrew."—Sir Murdoch paused; he fixed his eyes on my face; they seemed covered with a dreadful film; he breathed short, and trembled as in an ague fit. — "For heaven's sake," exclaimed I, terrified, "let me give you something; you are ill."—He heard me not.—"Yes," said he, with a suppressed and tremulous voice, "she withdrew! and whither?—to the arms of mercy! Yes, she withdrew from opposition, from cruelty, to the bosom of her Redeemer! There was

none to succour! none to help! When discovered, her vermilion cheek was pale! her eyes were closed! her beautiful tresses were mixed with the dank and filthy weeds of the stagnated pool! But her pure and unsullied soul had escaped pollution!"

"My dear Sir Murdoch," said I, "you distress me; for pity's sake, say no more. Let me call Lady Maclairn, indeed you grieve me, I cannot bear it." "Then how should I?" answered he; "yet I have survived her!"—He wiped away the tears which relieved him, and with more composure added, "be not alarmed, I am myself, and patient. My uncle," continued he, "lived only three weeks after this event. The destined bridegroom left the Highlands, and soon after died in his passage to the West Indies. His father was, I believe, consoled by adding Maclairn Castle and its impoverished demesnes to his possessions. I had, on quitting Scotland, taken with me as a domestic, my Matilda's

foster brother. His sister, something older than himself, had been her favourite attendant; and the poor girl in the hour of this distress committed to Wallace the care of preparing me for this intelligence; advising him to chuse one of my friends for an office which she foresaw he would be unequal to. It appeared that the angel had preconcerted her design, before she attended her father's summons; she had affixed to my picture a scrap of paper, and placed them in Jenny's prayer book. This precious evidence of her love and truth was inclosed in Jenny's letter to her brother; and contained these words: 'I die, a Maclairn; and Maclairn's affianced, faithful Matilda.' The poor fellow, unable to stand the shock himself, rushed from the house with this fatal letter in his hand; and under such perturbation of mind that he had neither taken his hat, nor perceived that this slip of paper had escaped him. He sought my most intimate friend; and with agonies

of grief implored his aid. In this interval of time, I, finding the summons of my bell unanswered, repaired to the room which Wallace occupied, and finding on his table the implements of writing, which I wanted, I sat down to write a card. Judging that he was not far remote, from seeing his hat; I moved it for my convenience. The note appeared! I will spare you, my child. Let it suffice, my friend and Wallace found me senseless. A raging fever succeeded. To this were opposed the cares of my friends, and a constitution never abused; but I was reduced to the state of an idiot; and as such, unconsciously embarked for England with my faithful Wallace, as unfit for the service, and from the hopes entertained of the change of climate and sea-air. He conducted me to his father's cottage; it was rich in nothing but fidelity and humanity; but in these, great Giver of all good! how liberal had been thy donation! Here the wretched Maclairn

was received; and recovered his strength of body, and the faculty of knowing his misery. I sold my commission, paid my debts; and without a thought beyond my Matilda's grave, I laboured with my hosts for the bread we shared. Wallace, with patient love and unexampled attachment, had watched over my *despair*, my *feebleness*, my now *settled melancholy*. At length, he hazarded to speak of the recent rupture with our American colonies, and with a soldier's spirit he infused into my heart the wish of dying like one. I had still two or three hundred pounds left, and determined in my design, and apparently governed by his arguments to shake off the indolence which was destroying my life and my honour, I took the road he pointed out. On reaching London, Wallace soon established his claims to favour; and he embarked for America as serjeant with the first troops destined to subdue the malcontents of that country. My friends, ad-

vised me to wait for the result of their
forts in my favour, not thinking that I co
with propriety serve in a subordinate ra
to the one I had filled and quitted with
disgrace. I consented; and took up
temporary residence in a lodging at K
sington-gravel-pits."

CHAP. III.

LETTER XXXV.

"IN this house I first met my Harriet. Her attractions were of a kind to engage my attention; for, like myself, she appeared to be the child of sorrow; and it was not difficult to discover that she was of a different order of beings from those who were with her. Her meek and pensive form, her tenderness to her infant, her courteous and unaffected manners when chance threw me in her way, soon produced their effects, and I insensibly forgot my usual train of thoughts in watching the hour for her appearing in our little garden

was continually engaged in the nursery with him; and there appeared a perfectly good understanding established in our family. But this season of tranquillity was not permitted to be permanent. The birth of Malcolm, an event which had opened once more my mind to the sensations of joy, was marked for a source of petty discontents, and officious intrusions. Mr. Flamall's visits to the Hall became more frequent, and his stay longer. Lucretia, as my gentle Harriet told me with a languid smile, was jealous of the little stranger, and feared that she should love him. For a time this passed, but abstracted as I was in myself, and disposed as I had always been, to reserve with Mr. Flamall, I discovered that his presence was the signal for Harriet's depressed spirits and Miss Flint's peevishness. Struck from time to time by the insolent authority he held in the famil , and the power he exercised over a woman impatient of the slightest contradiction from others, I was led to

conclusions which could alone solve the difficulty; and I foresaw that the time was not remote when Miss Flint would have a tyrant legally authorized to be the despot at Tarefield. I mentioned my opinion to my wife; she acknowledged that she believed Lucretia loved her brother, but that she still loved her independence better; and the struggle, added she, has been for so long a time so equally maintained, that I think her temper and his own have gained nothing in the contest. He has, however, succeeded in gaining her confidence, by his zeal and knowledge in her business, and his partiality for her darling boy has confirmed in her a respect for his talents.

"Satisfied at length, that my temper would not conform to Mr. Flamall's growing influence, I determined on my measures of prudence; and mentioned to my wife my wish of residing in France, and particularly at Nismes, on account of the air, and from motives of economy.

She cheerfully acceded to the proposal, and from that time became my pupil in the language of the country, rapidly recovering her school knowledge of it, and with improvement. But when my intention was declared to Miss Flint, my wife had to sustain a difficult part: prayers, reproaches, sullenness, and tears were employed to divert her from her compliance with my wishes and plan. She was firm, and steadily urged, that my health and spirits were objects which she could not, nor would not attempt to impede. Mr. Flamall was summoned from town, to assist in subduing Harriet's resolution. She referred him to me, and with all that poor and contemptible *cunning* which he calls *address*, he began his attack. He wondered what could have led me to the design of quitting a situation so convenient to my finances, and so congenial to my love of retirement. I answered with my usual reserve, that I had maturely deliber-

ated on my plan, and should adhere to it. 'You have been *teased* into it,' answered he, 'by Harriet's silly complaints of the temper of Miss Flint. I think she has been wrong, for she has known her long enough not to mind the submissions she exacts from every one in her way.' 'Lady Maclairn has been hitherto silent with me on this point,' answered I; 'but I thank you for having given me an additional motive for leaving Tarefield. My wife shall not submit to the caprice or tyranny of any one whilst I can prevent her degradation.' He coloured. 'I perceive none in her conduct,' replied he, 'that is not enforced by her duty, as the mother of a child who has no father at hand to protect him. If she complies with the inequalities of this woman's temper, she will be well paid for her trouble; and I do not see how she can reconcile herself to her duty to her son Philip, by sacrificing his future expectations for an uncer-

tain experiment. If she leave Philip with Miss Flint, her weak fondness will be his ruin; if she remove him, it is ten to one but that in a few months his place in her heart will be filled up by a new favourite; and she will hate him with the same fervour with which she at present conceives that his society is requisite to the preservation of her life.' 'He must take his chance, in this predicament,' replied I; 'and of two evils his mother will chuse the *least*. He will be rendered virtuous, I trust, by our cares, and he will escape the humiliating conditions annexed to dependence and expectations. I have no doubt of his mother's choice, nor will Miss Flint's fortune tempt her to leave her child to another's care.' He made no reply, and we parted. From this ineffectual trial of his eloquence, Mr. Flamall seemed convinced that I was not to be managed: he spoke no more on the subject. I had in the mean time, as I believed, silenced many of

Miss Flint's fears. I had engaged to return in three years on a visit to Tarefield; and soothed her with the prospect of Philip's improvement, promising to be his tutor. She seemed to consider our departure as inevitable; and to experience the necessity of submitting with a good grace to a privation which she could not prevent. The first week in October was fixed for our leaving Tarefield; and September was given to our necessary preparations, and Lucretia's consolation."

Sir Murdoch paused for some moments; at length resuming his narrative, he said, "I am not quite certain, that what I have further to say is strictly conformable with my own notions of honour, or with that justice which is prescribed by our religion. My mind is prejudiced; my suspicions rest on conjectural ground; and you must listen to what follows with caution and candour. Believe, if it be possible, that my infirmity of mind has raised up the hideous

spectre I am about to present to your eyes, and call it by any name but Flamall's"— He spoke with emotion, and wiped the faint dew from his forehead. "One evening in the early part of September," continued Sir Murdoch, "we were summoned from the avenue by the servant, who said that supper was served, and Mr. Flamall waiting for our return. I had, in conformity with Harriet's wishes, given more of my time than usual to Miss Flint, who had appeared sensible of my consideration. She pressed me to sup with her, and with good nature added, 'you will find your favourite ragout, which I ordered expressly for you.' I made no objections; and we entered the dining-room. Flamall was sitting at the spread table, reading a newspaper. 'I thought,' said he, throwing it aside, 'that I was doomed to sup solus; all has been waiting here these twenty minutes, and must now be cold. 'Whose fault was that?' replied Miss Flint, taking her station. 'If

you had not given *your orders*, the cook would have waited *for mine*.' 'I was half famished,' answered he, 'and a hungry man is not observant of ceremony.' During this observation he helped himself to the ragout of mushrooms, which stood at his hand, and with the eagerness of a keen appetite tasted them; when abruptly retiring to the side-board he regorged what he had taken, rinsed his mouth several times, and then swore, that one dish at least was hot enough for the devil himself. Knowing his aversion to spice, and particularly to Cayenne pepper, I was not disposed to condemn the cook, or to reject the mushrooms on his evidence; I therefore exchanged dishes with him, and helped myself to the reprobated mushrooms, and finding them seasoned to my palate, I ate some. He observed me, and remarked that he was astonished to see me relish so infernal a cookery. 'They are rather overdone,' said I, crossing my knife and

fork, and asking for beer; 'but I have not yet done with them.' The awkwardness of the servant, or my haste, so managed the business, that the glass of beer fell, inundated my plate, and was shivered in a number of pieces among the mushrooms. Flamall cursed the servant; and my wife said she was glad of the disappointment I had received; for that she had been told, that in the great number of mushrooms apparently alike, there was only one sort wholesome. Order, however, was restored, and the spirit of contradiction gave place to more cheerful conversation.

"In the night I was suddenly seized with a violent pain and a severe nausea, which was somewhat relieved by warm water; languor and stupefaction succeeded to this effort of nature, and when the physician saw me, he pronounced my life doubtful, and called the malady a *putrid fever*. I was tempted to declare *my opinion of the disease* for I had heard *his*; but my wife

was at my pillow. I soon became unconscious of my condition; *memory closed its records.*

"I will not attempt to describe to you, the sensations which assailed me, when I first recollected my wife. A sense of my own danger and of her protection were at once so blended that I could not for a moment support her absence. I was still persuaded that I had been poisoned; but my imagination had given a new form to Flamall. I thought it was a fiend invisible to all eyes but mine, and who watched to destroy my wife and child. His voice was for ever ringing in my ears—'They die if you discover me!' But let me quit a subject which unmans me, and afflicts you. Well might I have said, 'my kinsfolks have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me; they that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me a stranger. I called my servant, and he gave me no answer.' One being only filled up this void, and that was *my Harriet!* Soothed by her

gentleness, supported by her presence, my apartment was my world; and the horrors which had encompassed me gave place to passive quietness and transient pleasure, for my son Malcolm amused me. My recovery was slow and gradual; but in proportion as my reason gained strength, and my health was renewed, I experienced the painful sense of a mind conscious of its lost energies; and I considered myself as a subject for unfeeling curiosity, rather than for respect or usefulness. I shuddered with dread at the thoughts of being seen, and *for a time, no persuasion* could allure me into the garden. When, at length, I had in some degree recovered from this despondency, I listened with more docility to my wife's tender entreaties, and by degrees the garden became the boundary of my voluntary prison. Mr. Flamall's proposal of placing you here produced another change in my mind, for it roused in me a sense of injuries, and a resentment which bespoke a mind once more alive to its original character.

I *will* leave England, said I to Malcolm, with an energy which astonished him. I will have no concerns with Mr. Flamall. His very name is abhorrent to my ears. *He is a villain!* I checked myself; and Malcolm, to my surprise, said with calmness, 'I have long known him as one. But if *Maclairn* can prevent the mischief he is now meditating, will he not exert his prerogative? My father is made for the agent of Providence in the cause of the oppressed.' He proceeded to inform me of the circumstances relative to you, which had reached him by means of a young friend. The result of this conversation you know. I was resolved to receive you, to guard you from a less eligible situation, and in a word to shelter innocence, as securely as I could, from the machinations of a man, who I have reason to believe to be as cruel as he is artful and designing. Deprived as you are, my dear young lady," continued the worthy creature, "of those pleasures which

youth demands, and of the society of your early friends, yet, believe me, you are not without a guardian here: my arm, were it necessary, should protect you; and in a just cause, it would yet be found a *Maclairn's.*" His dark blue eyes were again fixed on my face, but with what expression!—"Not even my Harriet's claims," added he, "would restrain my vengeance, were my Matilda's image insulted."

"I neither fear Mr. Flamall's power, nor have I submitted to his authority," replied I, "in choosing to withdraw from my friend Mr. Hardcastle's house." My heart was on my lips, Lucy, and I briefly related to him my motives. "But," continued I, "little did I expect to find a parent in any abode appointed by such a miscreant as Flamall. I joyfully accept of the endearing title you offer: call me your child, your daughter: your affection shall be returned in acts of duty and reverence." "And when you forsake us," said he, re-

lapsing into pensiveness, "what are we to do?" "To rejoice in my happiness," answered I, "to solace your declining years with your Malcolm's children and mine; to live an evidence of that truth which promises peace to the virtuous man, both *here* and *hereafter*."—"It is her blessed spirit which speaks," said he.—"I will not permit you, my dear father," answered I, "to indulge in this enthusiasm; let us call a new subject." "I will obey you," replied he, "after one question. Tell me, has it not been a matter of surprise to you, as well as of curiosity, to see my wife so much influenced and attached to Miss Flint?" "Yes," replied I with firmness; "but your story has solved the enigma; Lady Mclairn knows that her brother has been, and may be still dear to this woman, and the sister's humanity wishes to repair the mischief which the brother's infidelity has made." He looked pleased. "It may be so," ob-

served he, "for I know her principles." His wife at this instant entered, and with assumed gaiety I told her, that I had been making my confession to Sir Murdoch, in return for his adopting me as a daughter. She smiled, and answered that she hoped I was also disposed to receive her as a mother. I gave her my hand, but added, "Will you be indulgent? Will you, like my father, permit me to love the man whom my heart and my understanding have prefered? On no other condition will I promise to be your *dutiful daughter.*" "Receive the blessing on any terms, my dear Harriet," said the baronet, pressing our hands in his; "she has already shed peace into my bosom, and hope and comfort into yours." Lady Maclairn made no other reply, than that of hiding her face in my bosom, and weeping.

Again, Lucy, do I repeat for the thousandth time, that *all is not genuine in this woman's conduct.* There is a *something*

which pervades and obstructs the display of those feelings which nature has bestowed on her, as intended blessings to herself and others, and with which she appears perpetually to struggle. At one moment her heart seems to be on her very lips with me; a tanother, she is silent, and as though intimidated by my presence. Sometimes I fancy my frankness is obtrusive, and my manners too unceremonious. I become more attentive, and she appears serious and more pensive, and anxiously inquires whether I am displeased with her. My answer dissipates the apprehension; cheerfulness returns, till some unguarded expression, some casual incident, again impedes my access to her heart. I think, Lucy, that she would not be a sufferer were she to trust me: I am certain that my compassion is now the most active of my feelings. She imagines, perhaps, that I think her a sharer in her brother's plots and contrivances; but she is mistaken,

for I know that she has detested him from the hour he proposed sending her husband to a mad-house; and I am assured, that she has not the most remote suspicion of his having in any way been accessary to Sir Murdoch's illness; for she has more than once told me, that his complaint came on as gradually as it has disappeared, and originated in the catastrophe of his cousin's death. I must finish this subject. Mrs. Allen assures you that Miss Cowley is well, and that her nightly dreams are not disturbed by *scarlet fevers*.

Heaven bless you, and all I love at Heathcot!

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XXXVI.

From the same to the same.

AS you are become reasonable, Lucy, I will tell you that Doctor Douglas is still of opinion, that I am better in the house than I should be by another buffeting from the north wind, to which he principally ascribes my late indisposition. My saline draughts, however, have now given place to orange jelly, which, as it pleases the *pet*, Mrs. Allen makes according to her recipe. She left me this morning to replenish her store, and Mrs. Warner's little parlour being convenient for the purpose, the cookery was done there; the kind hearted Mrs. Warner aiding and assisting. "I wish," said she, "I could persuade my lady to exchange her taste

for rum and water, for this pleasant and refreshing jelly; I am sure it would be better for her: she is in a constant fever; and what with her poor leg, and her fretting, she is hourly sinking." Mrs. Allen expressed her concern. "You would indeed pity her," replied Warner, "if you knew all: she is, at times, the most miserable creature in the world; and between ourselves, I think she is losing her senses. That was *a warning voice*, Mrs. Allen, that reached her from the poor captain, the last time he was in this house, or I am much mistaken. I have heard that Miss Flint was very unkind to her sister, Mrs. Howard, and the captain roused her *sleeping conscience*. I have lived with her nine years, and I can safely say that she is a changed woman in less than nine weeks. She has of late taken it into her head to send me to bed before her, and I hear her for hours after walking about her room. Within the last fortnight she has been

writing all day, and rummaging in her cabinet for letters, which she burns by dozens: then again, her temper madam, is now quite altered; for I do assure you she is as patient as a lamb! and if you could but see her knee, you would never forget it. I am sure it makes me tremble to see how she suffers." "Why do you not persuade her to have more able advice than her apothecary's?" observed Mrs Allen. "Bless you, my dear madam!" replied she, "Lady Maclairn has almost on her bended knees begged her to consult Doctor Douglas, with whom she is so pleased; but she will not consent. She says, 'Do not urge me; *you know, Harriet, that no doctor can cure me.* I must bear with patience this visitation of the Almighty,' and then she weeps for hours."

You know Mrs Allen, and you will not be surprised to hear that she has seen the miserable invalid this morning; whom

she found much more changed than even Warner's report had led her to expect. To-morrow I am to dine with the Heartleys: my doctor is the promoter of this enlargement, and will be here to see me properly equipped for the coach. I mean to be docile, for I expected this morning that Mrs. Patty, our maid, would have laid violent hands on me, for daring to cross the hall without clogs and my shawl. Be cheerful, my Lucy. I have to write to our Horace: and remember when you write from Heathcot, the words of the poet: "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise." Not a word of my *dreadful scarlet fever*, He might fancy fiction were truth, and that your Rachel Cowley had really been in danger of death, and of thus cheating him *of a wife to rule*.

Your's, as truly as *his*,

R. Cowley.

P. S. The unavoidable delay of my friend's dispatches permits me to add to the bulk of my letter. Leaving to the lovers of the pathetic and sublime at the abbey to describe my "secret interesting languor," and "fascinating" pale face, I shall simply tell you, that what with a hearty dinner on Mrs. Wilson's boiled fowls, and as hearty a welcome, they sent me home with a different complexion, and as blythe as a bird.

On entering the parlour, we found Lady Maclain alone; and for once counterfeiting failed, for her eyes were swoln with weeping. Sir Murdoch with tender alarm asked, "What had happened to distress her." "Wherefore do you ask that question, sir? demanded Malcolm, with emotion. "Is it not always from one and the same cause that my mother stands indebted for her trials of patience?" "If you mean poor Lucretia," answered she with mildness, "you wrong her, at least on this occasion, for I have scarcely seen her to day: she was en-

gaged in writing. But what will you say, when I tell you that I have to thank *Miss Cowley* for my red eyes?" She smiled affectionately on me, and added that I had left the new play of the *Stranger* in her way, "and if such be Kotsebue's influence on the passions," observed she, "in a foreign garb, what must be the effect he produces in his own language! I have been deeply interested in the piece." "I lose my patience continually," replied I, "when I think of the hours of comfort and amusement you give up to the silly resentment of an unreasonable woman. Why do you not cease being a *stranger* to your neighbours? Mrs. Heartley is formed for your friend." "I am never so happy, as *at home*," replied she, interrupting me. "I have my blessings under this roof, habit has endeared it to me; and at present, Heaven be praised! it is my own fault if I be not happy." She fondly leaned on her husband's shoulder as she said

is. Malcolm placing himself in the va-
nt space on the other side on the sofa,
served, with seriousness, that content-
nt, at least, was in her reach; for
rt Mr. Wilson had secured the refusal
the *Wereland Farm*; and could either
rchase the estate, or have it on a long
se. "I am rejoiced to hear you are
ely to succeed," replied she, "for from
ur description of its beauties it must be
enviable spot." "To me it would be
paradise under any description," replied
e son, "could I promise myself to see
u and my father inmates with me there.
cottage with mud walls and indepen-
nce is all I wish." "You are right,
y dear Malcolm," answered she, with
gnity. "But do not imagine your mo-
er is a slave beneath this roof. You give
the little vexations of my life, much
ore importance than I do. Poor Lu-
etia may, it is true, sometimes appear

to you capricious and imposing, and thus disturb the serenity you wish me; but I am weak whenever this happens, for I know she loves me; and whilst she lives I shall never have a wish to quit Tarefield." "Would to God, then, she were dead!" said Malcolm. "You would be more charitable," answered she, mildly, "did you better understand her present condition." "Perhaps I might," replied he, "and wish her reformation, could I belive the Ethiopian could change his skin." "There needs no miracle to effect a reformation of our tempers, Malcolm," said she gravely; "the attempt is arduous, the path is difficult which leads to repentance; but it is not inaccessible; and if you knew the present difficulties of this poor woman, labouring under sickness and dejection of mind, you would not wish that the only friend she has *on earth* should quit her." Malcolm

was silenced; and if such be the motives of Lady Maclairn's conduct I ought to be silenced.

At supper Mrs. Allen joined us; she had prevailed on the invalid to call in Doctor Douglass, who to-morrow is to meet her former physician, *a Doctor Tufton*. Her account of Miss Flint softened the good Baronet; but I perceived that Malcolm's prejudices were unconquered. Mrs. Allen tells me this woman is dreadfully ill; and suffers excrutiating pain from the tumour on her knee. Like Malcolm my hour of conversion is not yet arrived; and if pain and sickness are necessary to her salvation, why should I grieve? Yet one does not like to hear of remedies that are wore than horse-whipping. Good night, my dear girl! Allen is weary, and I am on my good behaviour still; for Douglass is offended by my late hours; and swears he will

write to Mr. Hardcastle and prevent your letters, "tempting me to evil." Tell Mary every one here loves her, and that her sister boasts of her. You will add whatever will content you to the name of

RACHEL COWLEY.

The reader is now to be informed that Miss Cowley's pen was for more than a month suspended by a visit which Miss Hardcastle and Miss Howard made at the Abbey. The termination of Miss Cowley's minority, as settled by law, put her into possession of her grandmother's fortune; and counsellor Steadman was induced, partly with a view to that business, and partly to consult his fair client in respect to a letter written by Mr. Flamall on the subject of his nephew's secret marriage, to pay her a short visit. The young ladies were therefore conducted by him to Mr. Wilson's; and their escort home was

the counsellor's friend, whose house at Bishop's-Auckland was his abode during his stay.

It appears that Mr. Flamall acknowledged that the restrictive clauses in Mr. Cowley's will relative to his daughter's marrying M. Philip Flint were rendered null and void by the impossibility of her acceding to the conditions; but he insisted on his right to the exercise of his office not only as this related to the management of her property, but also to her choice of a husband. With many law arguments he proved that Miss Cowley could not marry without his consent till she had attained her twenty-fifth year, without incurring the disability declared in her father's will for her unconditional possession of his property. "You, Sir," continues he, "will, as a professional man, see, that, were I more disposed than I am to forego a trust committed to me by a friend whom I still

revere, the law would oblige me to do my duty. Were it not so, believe me I would cheerfully relinquish an office which neither suits my health nor gratifies my feelings. I am not ignorant of Miss Cowley's unjust suspicions of my *honour*, nor of the prejudicies she has infused into the minds of her friends. My conduct shall be a full refutation of the charges she has brought against me; charges which originated from the disappointment of her romantic views; and from too implicit a confidence in those to whose care she had been incautiously trusted." He next entered into the detail of his nephew's ingratitude, &c. but as the reader is prepared for this subject and, it may be, disposed in favour of youthful indiscretion, rather than to sympathise in Mr. Flamal's mortifications, I shall pass over this part of the letter, which concludes with mentioning his intention of conducting the two young Cowleys to England in the

following spring, in order to place them in a more suitable situation, than with their mother, at Mr. Dalrymple's.

Miss Cowley's friends still adhered to their first opinion, and Mr. Flamall was suffered to remain in his post without other marks of distrust than such as the counsellor's vigilance and the attention of Miss Cowley's friend, Mr. Oliver Flint, gave to his mode of conduct. But Mr. Flamall wanted not for acuteness; and, foiled in his ambition, he thought it prudent to secure a safe retreat. Fortunately for himself, as well as for Miss Cowley's interest, he found, for once, that "honesty was the best policy:" that by employing his talents and his diligence for the benefit of the estates he might succeed in gaining a good report, and the continuance of an employment which was advantageous and respectable.

Sir Murdoch during this term of jubilee, as it might be called at Tarefield, found other faces to admire as well as Miss

Cowley's. His contentment rose to cheerfulness, and in the enjoyment of a society whose attention and solicitude were given to please and amuse him, he so entirely gained the advantage over his habits of retirement and his dejection of mind, that in Miss Cowley's words, "she had ceased to love him, for he had the nerves and activity of a fox-hunter." Miss Flint's declining health and spirits were the two ostensible apologies for Lady Maclairn's taking no part in these hours of cheerfulness and social ease. She succeeded in her request that Miss Hardcastle would divide her time between the Abbey and the Hall; and Lucy, with a candour and gentleness so peculiarly her own, was not only charmed with her, but with unceasing labour endeavoured to remove from her friend the prejudices she entertained to her disadvantage. Mrs. Allen, ever on the side of charity, took up Miss Hardcastle's arguments; and

Miss Cowley, with her natural frankness, acknowledged that her being Mr. Flamall's sister might have biassed her judgment. Some steps were taken to produce a reconciliation between the captain and Miss Flint: these were made without his knowledge, for Miss Flint refused to see her niece; and Lady Maclairn judged it improper to urge her request; as it appeared the subject distressed her, and increased her melancholy.

The departure of the young ladies in the beginning of June, again leaves me to my allotted task; and my readers to the gratification of their curiosity.

LETTER XXXVII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

BE comforted, my dear girl. We are trying at the Abbey to forget you, and to be contented with *every-day* blessings. Mr. Hardcastle and Mr. Sedley are now enjoying their holidays. And I hope that Mary's April face is exchanged for one which their kind greetings will render cheerful. As you may both of you have some compunction hanging about you, for having disturbed the tranquillity of Tarefield, I will inform you, that fortune, liking Sir Murdoch's holiday face better than that of *Malvolio*, which, in the days of my folly, I wickedly gave him, has by one of those freaks so common in her administration, produced a letter, which has dissipated

the gloom your absence caused, and he has been laughing with me at the contents. Here followeth a copy for your edification.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Lady Maclairn, from Mrs. Serge.

Putney, June the 9th.

"My dear cousin."

THIS letter will surprise you I dare say; and, it may be, puzzle you, unless you remember your giddy Lydia Hatchway; but old love with me is not forgot, though so many years have passed since we last met. However, I doubt not but as Mrs. Serge, you will still acknowledge your former friend; and trusting to this hope, I sat down to inform you of my inten-

tions to renew the hintercourse so long interrupted by various hevents. The bad state of health of my eldest girl have, for a long time, been a great affliction to Mr. Serge as well as myself. We have tried Bath, and consulted several doctors without gaining any advantage. We are now advised by a very clever young man, whom my Jerry meets frequently at his horacle's, a Counsellor Steadman's, to trust to her youth and change of air; and it is determined that this summer shall be given to journeying. Thank God, my Jerry is a hindependent man, having given up business, with a very *beasy* fortune, so we have no cares about *hexpences*; but we have been for a time quite undetermined in regard to the road we should take. I was for the *tower* of Norfolk; but I have been out-voted. My daughter Nora, who has just left her school in ——— square, talkes much of the beauties of *Wales*, and have bought a set of prints to shew us;

but I am not willing to leave England, and with a sick person it would be very improper to go to a place where the people do not understand English; so Vales is out of the question. But Nora talks much, at present, of some lakes in your part of the world, which it seems, are *visited* by every person of taste; and although I never heard of them before, I am much inclined to indulge her with a sight of them, as I can, at the same time, gratify my wish of seeing your ladyship. My husband highly approve of this plan; but fear that you will not relish so many *intruders*, even for a night or two; but I tell him I am certain you will welcome us as *bold* friends if you can make it convenient to lodge us. We shall travell slow, on account of Caroline and our horses; and rest with you a day or two. You may expect to see us, lug and baggage, about the end of this month; but I shall hope to hear from you before we finally depar-

mine on our journey, and in case our visit suit you, will give you notice of our happroach before you see us. With compliments to Sir Murdoch and Mr. Maclairn,

I remain

Your affectionate cousin and friend,

LYDIA SERGE.

P. S. We shall bring a maid with us. Counsellor Steadman assure my Jerry that you will not find it difficult to provide for our horses. We shall have six with us, besides the servants', that run *bout* : my husband is only afraid, that you will think we are taking a freedom that may give not only trouble but offence; but I laugh at his scruples; for you well know, I expect no ceremony, nor practice none with those I love.

I have really, my dear Lucy, exerted my utmost skill, in copying Mrs. Serge's epistle *verbatim*; but I was never more con-

ced of the truth contained in the wise
n's observation, "Train up a child
the way he should go," says the
of Sirach, "and when he is old he
not depart from it." My fingers and
nts have been so long cramped by my
spelling book, that I much doubt
ther I have done justice to Mrs.
ge's orthography; but when she arrives I
tudy her vocabulary, in order to prove
Mary that she has still to learn a lan-
ge which she may need without losing
ht of British land. With streaming eyes,
laughter has its tears, I "*implored*"
dy Maclairn to "*badmit*" these guests.
did more than smile; for laughing in
turn, she asked Sir Murdoch whether
was disposed to indulge his daughter
h the opportunity of acquiring a lan-
ge, which, with my gaiety, and its
elty, would render me irresistible.
answered cheerfully that he had only
fear; and that was, lest such an ad-

dition to her cares should be fatiguing to herself, and, it might be, unpleasant to Miss Flint. "I have no apprehensions," replied she mildly: "as to Lucretia's consent," her features reassuming their usual pensiveness, and that suspicion succeeding, which it has been yours and Mrs. Allen's labour to convince me proceeds from timidity and delicate nerves; "I have no doubts of my sister Lucretia's perfect acquiescence," added she; "and I confess it would gratify me to acquit myself of a part of that debt of gratitude which I owe to this lady's aunt, who by her attentions and tender care of me, probably, saved my life: her father and mother also were extremely kind to me when I was with them, and, as was supposed, far gone in a decline." "Then lose no time, my Harriet," answered the baronet, "in acquainting her, that we shall receive them as friends; and that we will do all we can do for the accommodation

of *friends*. She looked pleased, but hesitated. "I have yet one point to settle before I determine," observed she. "Mr. Serge is a plain honest man; but he is little acquainted with the usages of the world. His wife, I presume, has not gained much improvement of mind since I knew her: although in a prosperous situation of fortune, we may, I think, conclude that her society has not been select. You will find these people quite remote from yourself; they will be troublesome to you, and if my cousin Lydia likes Tarefield, she may delay her visit to the lakes rather longer than you will relish: I am certain they will not amuse you." Sir Murdoch eagerly set aside this objection. All is now *en train* for Mrs. Serge's reception; for Lady Maclairn has sent off her answer, and cordial acceptance of the visit; and preparations are now making for their arrival.

In continuation.—For once, at least, in

my life I will do justice to Lady Maclairn's address. She has been to consult me on the means her fertile genius has adopted to *trick* Sir Murdoch into another apartment. Our plot has succeeded, and we are now busy in making such arrangements for him, as will, it is hoped, soon reconcile him to the loss of his detestable grated windows, and which will tend to obliterate from his mind the saddening ideas associated with his prison. This apartment is now to be destined to the strangers' use, and they will have but one staircase to explore to their several rooms. I have also been prepared to form my estimate of the pleasure I may expect from our visitors. She spoke of Mrs. Serge's parents. Captain Hatchway was the master of a ship, and his family resided at Y—m—th. His sister, Mrs. Priscilla Hatchway, had been the early friend of Lady Maclairn's mother, and was her first cousin. "I have not seen Mrs.

Serge, for many years," added her ladyship, "She was then a thoughtless, giddy girl, but perfectly innocent, and good natured. When she lost her good father, I have reason to believe she had little whereon to depend for her future maintenance: her mother had no talents for economy, and her daughter's union with Mr. Serge was a circumstance of great utility to her, as well as of security to her lively and pretty daughter. Mr. Serge was rich when he married, and since that time has been very fortunate, by an accession of wealth which he little expected. He is a worthy honest man; and as she says, a *excellent* husband, though more than twenty years her senior; but you may imagine that neither his education, nor his pursuits in life can have any similarity with Sir Mordoch's. He has been 'Mr. Serge the rich taylor' till within these three or four years, when I heard that he had dropped this designation, for 'Mr. Serge

the *contractor*;' now, it appears, he is 'Mr. Serge the *gentleman*;' and it is only to be feared, that his lady will find more difficulty in sustaining this part, than any which she has hitherto performed. She will have gained little, if the simplicity of her character has been infringed by her commerce with fashion and luxury; for her spirits, when I knew her, were extremely volatile." I was left: the workmen summoning her ladyship, who is at present very busy in Sir Murdoch's deserted prison. New hangings, new windows, &c. are to change its aspect. Sir Murdoch, either discomfited by seeing the alterations which have taken place in his fortress, or vexed that his wife has converted her dressing-room to his convenience, has been with me in his turn; and with some signs of spleen, he observed, that Harriet would have matters settled in her own way; for she never regarded what was due to herself. "I could

have done very well without my apartment for a week," added he, "and without dispossessing her of a room she likes; and I suppose these good people will not stay longer than a few days; for I think they will soon be tired of us." "I hope not," answered I, "for I expect much amusement from them." "A few hours will lessen your enjoyment," replied he gravely, "of any amusement which makes no appeal to your taste and understanding: you will not find in novelty an equivalent for ignorance and vulgarity. As for the husband of our cousin, I am prepared to find in him one of those characters which more peculiarly disgust me; for unless he has more modesty and common sense than the generality of that class of men who are elevated by wealth to stations which neither their birth nor attainments in knowledge can make easy to them, he will soon weary me. I understand he has already dropped the *taylor* for

the *contractor;* and, without doubt, fancies himself qualified to rank with any of his superiors." I saw that the blood royal of Malcolm King of Scotland, or at least of the Highlanders, was not exhausted by flowing through the veins of Sir Murdoch and his progenitors for so many centuries. It mounted to his face; and I should have smiled saucily, had I not recollected the pure reservoir it filled in the baronet's bosom. I can pardon this childish vanity, Lucy, when I see it qualified by an honest pride; and if by a consciousness of the eminence of our ancestors, in the annals of time, which blazon forth their glory and virtue, we be emulated to follow in the same track, it is well. But in Sir Murdoch I regard with lenity even a little pride of heart for the *shadow* of greatness; any thing which gives to him *self-consequence*, and *self-confidence* is useful to him, as tending to repress the painful recollection

of those hours, when by his malady, he was levelled lower than the dust; and under which the boasted prerogatives of man, and all the adventitious circumstances of his place in this world, are sunk in darkness! A little vanity will not hurt my patient; and it is the pleasure of my life here, to see that I can make him laugh at my follies, and forget his own infirmities. Farewell!

Yours, faithfully,

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. The Heartleys, with their beaux left us yesterday. Poor Malcolm wishes the Serges had taken the unknown route to "Vales." "But man is born to trouble." He could not leave his father to the burden of Mr. Serge. Heaven preserve you! We are well; and the domestic arrangements necessary for our expected visitors have been useful to Lady Maclairn—*She thinks less.*

LETTER XXXIX.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

July the 1st.

"To journalise, to send the whole and full length pictures of the Serges," such are my Lucy's commands. "To be faithful in detailing the conversation of Mrs. Serge," *Voilà* Mary, who adds, that "a new language is so delightful when from her dear Miss Cowley's mouth or pen!" Next comes Mr. Hardcastle: your father, Lucy, can bribe, can cajole. True to his sex, he still knows the direct road to a woman's heart. But it may be that you, who are on some points an obstinate unbeliever, may demand *proofs* of his *savoir faire* with your simple-hearted Rachel. I will transcribe his little and

well-sealed note for your conviction. "My dear *child*, I send you a model, by which you are in future to make up your letters for Heathcot. The gentleman, who brought me the dispatches from Lisbon which I now forward to you, has filled my heart with joy and hope. *Your brother Horace* was the subject of his conversation for an hour; and we must love him, my child, for he is beloved wherever he is known. When my kind visitor quitted me, I proceeded to examine the parcel he had left; which, from its rotundity, I judged to be a Portugal onion. It remains for you to investigate the truth of my supposition; for on examination, I found only the first "*peeling*" was destined for *Heathcot*. You will therefore be graciously disposed to indemnify us for the unequal partition of Horace's gift; and send us the *shreds*, *trimmings*, and even the *pack-thread* which you will glean from the respectable society of Mr.

Serge's family. I love my girl in her sportive humour; and never think of her without losing a portion of my own!"

With my heart on my lips, and the Portugal onion in my bosom, can you blame me if I should transgress your law of charity, Lucy? I will be as good as I can; but thus tempted to folly, if I sin thank my betrayer, and do not chide me.

Yesterday we were all prepared for our guests' appearance at the dining hour. I kept my station at the dressing-room window, being too happy to be good company below stairs. Suppose you place yourselves by my side. But no: that idea would have spoiled me for an observer of all beyond the walls of the room whereas I was on the *alert*. First then, drew up a handsome plain coach, with nothing beyond Mr. Serge's modest cypher on its highly finished pannels: it was drawn by four beautiful bright bay horses, driven

by two postillions in plain dark green livery jackets. This equipage was followed by an elegant and low phaeton; the horses making the set, as I presume, being exactly like the others. Two out-riders, well mounted, completed the cavalcade. So much for the *Taylor's* first approach, which wanted only glare and ostentation to rival a *Nabob's*. Mr. Serge slowly and cautiously alighted, "round as the shield of my fathers." (Sir Murdoch sees not my profanation of Ossian's sublimity). He was soberly dressed in a complete suit of dark brown broad-cloth, *a wig*—(you know my veneration for wigs,) which, had it been properly distributed, would have supplied crops for a regiment of spruce journeymen, and brainless coxcombs. A large silk handkerchief tied loosely round his neck; plain and homely features, with a healthy cheek and treble chin. In defiance of all given rules, Mr. Serge's leg and foot are admirably neat

and well formed; and though neither decorated with silk stockings nor fashionable buckles, more than rivals *Mr. Smughead*'s.

His greetings with the baronet were unconstrained and hasty; for he instantly advanced to the phaeton, in which rode the poor Caroline the picture of youth subdued by sickness; and nearly exhausted by fatigue and weak spirits. She called upon me for compassion, and I forgot your orders, whilst contemplating her languid countenance. The father, unmindful of all but her, was preparing to assist her, when Malcolm saying something to her, took her in his arms and carried her into the drawing-room, Mr. Serge following him. Next appeared Mrs. Serge in a light green habit; her fair and round face heightened to the milk-maid's hue by the closeness of the carriage: a profusion of ringlets, well filled with brown powder, but which had

maliciously quitted the station assigned it, and then lodged on all the *prominent* parts of Mrs. Serge's person, leaving the golden locks deprived of their glossy brightness, though not their colour: an embroidered waistcoat, lappelled, and more open at the bosom than even fashion of late has sanctioned: this deficiency was supplied by lace and cambrick; gold earrings and necklace, a riding hat and feathers; and in a hand, garnished with rings, and as white as snow, she carried a parasol. Her voice loud; her utterance flippant, and her salutation familiar and loquacious. Next, lightly sprang from the carriage the beautiful Leonora, the youngest daughter, her dark brown locks hanging in disorder over the face of a wood nymph; large and intelligent dark eyes, and a cheek vying in colour with the autumnal peach: the lightness of a sylph and the grace of fashionable ease. The loud laugh which reached me from Mrs.

Serge did not prevent me seeing *Miss Lydia* emerge from her concealment. She very deliberately gave to Sir Murdoch a little black terrier to hold, and with a piece of cake in her hand, as deliberately secured her footing on terra-firma; but she was slip-shod, and caution was necessary. In size she comes very near to her mother, and she would be as pretty, were she not too pale. The golden locks are with Miss Lydia softened down to flaxen-coloured, which, with very light blue eyes, give an expression of heaviness to her countenance, perfectly conformable to her fat, and square person. Next and last came a smart abigail, and Miss Lydia hastily seizing her arm, followed the steps of Sir Murdoch and the ladies into the house.

I remained in my apartment, till summoned by Malcolm to his mother. I learned, that Miss Serge had nearly fainted before she reached the drawing-room,

that she had retired to her own room, but was recovered. My introduction to the strangers followed, and I took my seat. The dustiness of the roads, and apologies for Mrs. Serge's being in such a "pickle," succeeded to the compliments of my entrance; "but as *Villet* was busy about Caroline, she was compelled to *accept* of her ladyship's *indulgence*, and remain as she was: but I think, child," added she, turning to Miss Nora, "you might make yourself a little more tidy; I dare say Miss Cowley would lend you *a comb*." My offers of service were prevented by the young lady's saying pertly, that she trusted also to Lady Maclairn's good-nature for an excuse, not knowing the secret of being *tiddy*, without an entire change of dress. The broad stare at me from time to time, the weary, careless attention to what was addressed to herself, at once spoke the *girl of fashion*. I took out my netting box, and the young lady, after curiously exa-

mining some books on a side table, withdrew into the bow window and read. "Do you wish me to speak as loud and fast as Mrs. Serge? recollect that I have her dialect to acquire, and that I have not a speaking trumpet at command, but I will do my best. To the detail of her daughter's long illness, who had taken all "*maaner* of things," and tried a *hocean* of physic, succeeded "*bold*" stories of her father and mother, in which her filial tenderness unaffectedly appeared, and to which Lady Maclairn gave a lively interest by adding her testimony to their worth. "My dear mother had an excellent constitution, and the best spirits in the world," observed Mrs. Serge: "even *ater* she was a *vidow*, she could tire out two or three partners in a night's dancing; but, dear soul! she trusted too much to her strength, and refusing to change her clothes after being wet to the skin in a *water frolic*, she never held up her head." Tears fell copiously from Mrs.

Serge's eyes in this part of the conversation, but in a few minutes the cloud gave place to a hearty laugh, on recollecting Mr. Flamall's cheating her with a painted "window at the castle at *Vindsor*, so *naturally done* that no soul alive would have taken it for a painted *vone*." Questions and wonderments succeeded, that so handsome a man had not made his *fortin* by marrying; she was sure it had been his own fault. Lady Maclaim soon changed this topic by asking her how she liked Bath. "Why on the whole *very vell*," replied she, "but it is not to be compared with *Lunnun*: the rooms are certainly *very* grand, but it is *halways* the same thing. I like to see a play, or Sadler's Wells much better; and as for the Criscent, and the Circus, in some *vinds*, you would think yourself in Y———th Downs in a *northheaster*, but one see *swarms* of fine folks come from the hupper part of the town, to bask in the sun on the South Parade, where we had our lodg-

ings." Willing to hear the sound of the beauty's voice, and as willing to spare the further distension of her rosebud mouth, I asked her whether the season for Bath had been full. "Much as usual," replied she; "there were many people of rank and fashion, but we had few opportunities of meeting with them. Good society depends on a proper introduction." She threw on her mother a glance, which I could not misunderstand. "As for *bintroduction*, Nora," observed the good Mrs. Serge, "I found that *wery* heasy; you have only to shew your purse, and you may have a card party when you please. I could have been acquainted with several ladies of quality, if I would have played the new fashioned way at loo, but," continued she, addressing herself to Lady Maclairn, "I was soon sick of *pam* when he was in *good company*, as they call themselves. I was not cunning enough for your

Lady Gudgeons; nor you, child, for her saucy daughters." Miss Nora had not time to reply to her share of the last observation. The mother continued—"Who do you think I saw at Bath, finer than our princesses? But you will never guess! Don't you remember the pretty little girl who used to sing to you at my aunt Prissy's? I mean the Knacker's daughter. She is now the wife of a very rich man, and is quite the fashion. I took an opportunity of reminding her of old friends and former times; she drew up, forsooth! and *wery* coldly observed that I had a *wery* good memory! She had been so long in the world, that she had forgotten me, till I announced my name. I detest pride, my lady, so I was resolved to be even with her. 'Dear me!' said I, 'I wonder how people can forget early friends. I have often thought of you and the scrape you got into, by breaking three or four "quarrels" in Mrs. Doughty's parlour window. My dear mother often

used to laugh at the fright you were in, when she pacified the old lady, by paying the damage you had done, and saving you from being put in the cellar.' She looked," added the speaker, laughing heartily, "as though she would have preferred Mrs. Doughty's cellar to my conversation. But I have no notion of a little prosperity turning one's head, 'tis a poor return to make for God's goodness."

Miss Nora, during this discourse, had relapsed into silence, and was endeavouring to find amusement by poring over some music books she had taken up. "You play, no doubt," observed I; "and I have a harp, and a good piano-forte in my apartment." She smiled bewitchingly. "A *little* on both these instruments," answered she, "but I am out of practice, for I am no Orpheus, and cannot give to stocks and stones the power of feeling the charms of music." A summons to the dining-room prevented my reply. We there found the

gentlemen and Miss Lydia, who, "*malgré elle*," soon completed the family party. "How is Miss Serge?" asked Lady Maclairn, in a tone of tenderness so peculiarly her endowment; "I hope she has slept, otherwise I should not be able to pardon myself for not being with her." "Poor thing!" replied the father, "she was better with me, for she is so flurried, and so fearful of being troublesome here, that it has made her very poorly indeed." "We will soon make her well, my good sir," replied the baronet, if she has no malady more serious than this: my Harriet will soon convince her that she is at home." "Thank ye, Sir Murdoch," answered the agitated father. "I have no doubts on the subject, and I told my dear girl I was sure you were not of the number of those who think a sick guest a burden. God forbid it should be so! for such must needs have hard hearts! But Willet tells us," continued he, addressing his daughter. Ly-

dia, "that your sister was frightened, and disturbed last night: why did you not call me up? You know it is what I desire you to do always, when she does not settle." "Lord, papa!" replied Miss Lydia, "it was nothing but a drunken man in the next chamber who was *obstroperous*. I told her twenty times that our door was bolted. He might have *fit* with the other *feller* till sunrise, they would not have kept me from sleeping if Caroline had been quiet." "Mr. Serge has fully accounted for your sister's indisposition to day," observed Lady Maclairn mildly; "you have good health, my dear young lady, and do not know how soon the weak are fluttered; but a night of undisturbed repose will remedy, I trust, this little alarm." Poor Lydia blushed, but did not answer. "I expect to establish my credit as a Lady Bountiful, before you leave me," continued Lady Maclairn, with assumed cheerfulness, turning to Mrs. Serge; "I have not forgotten your aunt

Priscilla's recipes, which saved me from a decline, nor the kindness with which she administered them: it would be to me a blessing to imitate her in her tender cares." Mr. Serge crossed his knife and fork, and fixed his tearful eyes on Lady Maclairn's face, whilst his lady cordially thanked her, and added, "But you must try also to persuade my husband to think his girl not so bad as he fancies, for he not only *damp* her spirits but ours." "So he *do* mamma," said Miss Lydia, breaking through the stupid vacuity of her countenance with a vivacity that surprised me. "Caroline can't be so veak as papa *think*, or she could not have gone so much in the phaeton, when she knew I hated to ride 'stuffed' up in the coach." "Hold your tongue, child!" said the father gravely; "you know the phaeton was ordered for your sister's *use*, not your *whims*." She was silenced and looked sullen. Pitying the poor girl at my side, who had shown unequivocal

marks of *feeling*, as well as of *impatience*, I proposed to her to withdraw into my apartment, and Miss Leonora followed me with alacrity. She immediately went to the harp, and with a touch convinced me that she was no mean proficient on the instrument, any more than in singing, though she pleaded being out of practice, since she had left her school. Sir Murdoch, attracted by our voices from the garden, craved admittance for himself and Mr. Serge, pleading that the other ladies had left him to visit the invalid. Mr. Serge with much apparent curiosity examined the room and me by turns; and at length he said, "Pray, young lady, what is the name of the boarding-school where you were trained? I replied that I had never been in any school, having had the good fortune of living with a lady who instructed me herself. "There is nothing like it," said he, nodding his head sagaciously. "*My Caroline* was educated at home by a

good aunt, and though she cannot draw, nor play, as you and Nora do, yet she is a very sensible and good young woman, and I think you will like her." I told him, I had postponed my own gratification, lest my visit should be troublesome, till she had somewhat recovered from the effects of her journey. "Ah, poor thing!" said he with emotion, "there is the rub! she is too good for this world! But you will say, when you know her, that you never saw a more patient sufferer!"

In a word, it appears to me, that poor Mr. Serge can talk of nothing but his daughter: that his lady can do any thing better than command her tongue: that Miss Lydia is an automaton, useful to fetch and carry; and that the beauty is neither in her element here, nor contented any where. So much for my first four-and-twenty hours knowledge of this illustrious family.

Good Night!

LETTER XL.

From the same to the same.

I SUPPOSE I shall have no intelligence of our friends at Hartley-pool, more direct than what Mary sends me from Heathcot. Malcolm is not in spirits, he confesses that he never had a more difficult lesson to practise, than the one at present assigned him, which is to amuse Mr. Serge at Tarefield, instead of guarding the Hesperian fruit at Heartley-pool. He told me this morning with a very solemn countenance, that he heard Alice's beauty had gained her the first post of honour, and that she was much admired. I laughed him out of his folly; but it may not be amiss for Mary to give Alice a hint not to look *too handsome* at Heartley-pool.

Miss Serge's increased indisposition has prevented my visiting her till this morning; Doctor Douglass was consulted, and he has happily succeeded in relieving the pain she suffered. On congratulating her mother, she replied, "to be sure, it is a comfort to see her *beasy:* but, dear me! the thing is to see t last." And with this observation she seemed to have dismissed the subject of her daughter's indisposition, and she talked only of the *lakes,* and her surprise that she had livedso many years inthe world withouthaving heard of them till within a few months.

The fond father, in the mean time, now looks up to the doctor with the most sanguine hopes; and is as completely domesticated here as if he had been born at the Hall. Malcolm is the delight of his eyes, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilson are, in his own words, "extraordinary people." We contrive by their aid to amuse him many hours in the day; and the goodbaronet has not been interrupted in his pursuits: he ap-

pears to enjoy the enlargement of the circle, particularly in the evening. Last night, after supper, Mr. Serge could talk of nothing but his day's amusement. He had been with his friends and guides to see Wereland Place, a farm in speculation, as you know, for Malcolm. "It is very odd," observed he, "that when I lived in London and kept tight to the *board*, as I may say, I used to think of the pleasure, I should enjoy in the country; but when there, I was always weary of walking about before sunset. Now I think this was because I had nothing to do but to walk about, and that it was idleness, not the country, of which I was tired. Pray how old is Mr. Wilson?" Malcolm thought he was turned of fifty. "Surprising!" observed Mr. Serge; "what a colour, and what activity! There is nothing like the life of a farmer! I have given Mr. Wilson a hint to-day that I should like to purchase something in this neighbourhood. I should not cavil at any price,

hat would fix me upon you, my young riend, as an apprentice in the farming bu- iness. I see clearly that in order to en- oy the country, a man must have country usiness on his hands: you would, I lare say, help a young beginner to know ats from barley." He shook Malcolm's and with cordiality, and added in a low oice something at which he laughed hear- ily, and which produced a crimson blush n Malcolm's face. "How would Mrs. Serge and the young ladies like to give up the fashionable world, for the business of the dairy and the retirement of the country?" asked he. "Dear me!" answered Mrs. Serge, "I *bam* so used to Mr. Serge's *ways* that he know I only laugh at his *vims*. I am sure he is tired to death at Putney, if he stay with us a week at a time! He would make a fine hand of it, to live in this part of the world, where *vone* do not see a soul by the week together!" "Are there any noblemen's seats near you, Mr.

Maclairn?" asked Miss Leonora, checking her mother's loquacity. "Not many," was the answer. "So much the better," replied Mr. Serge, "I never courted their custom nor their acquaintance: let every man keep his station and place, and 'cut his coat according to his cloth,' in more ways than one. I am a man who love proper subordination, though I hate slavery. An army is badly disciplined, in my mind, when the commanding officers are 'hail fellow well met' with the privates; and when I see a lord or a duke quit his rank, I understand how matters are going on. I have not lived in the world for nothing." "Well but, papa," said the lively Miss Nora, seizing in a moment her father's allusion, "I suppose there is no sin in a private soldier's rising in his regiment if he can do so honourably," "Certainly not, child," answered Mr. Serge. "Why then do you persist in refusing the borough offered you, and being knighted? Your family

might be the better for good connections; sir, and yourself more useful, than in your present private station." "You talk, Nora, like a girl," answered the placid father; "but all the world knows, child, though it has not yet reached you, that the borough and the title, might have been purchased by any man as well as your father; I neither liked the price, nor the duty; and I trust, those who had the bargain, will like it better than I did mine for clothing the army," added he, turning to Sir Murdoch. "It requires a better head than I have," pursued he, "to make contracts with the present managers. I give you my word they understand very well how to make a good bargain for the public purse; and I found their *shears* cut closer than *mine*, notwithstanding my experience in the use of them. However, it is all well: I am quit, with knowing I never spoiled a poor fellow's clothing of a year, for the sake of cabbaging a shilling's worth of the stuff." He

laughed heartily at this specimen of his wit, and enjoyed ours with delight. These Serges, Lucy: amuse me, they exhibit to me characters, which, if not singular in themselves, are new to me. My standard for human nature, and human conduct, requires some medium: as it stood at Heathcot, it was too much elevated for the multitude; and in my respect for virtue, you have often reproached me, for wanting pity for folly. I am persuaded that you would at present be satisfied with me. I am neither tempted to laugh, nor to yawn, when Mrs. Serge, in all the simplicity of kindness, pities my *dull life*, and promises me to exact from Sir Murdoch and Lady Maclairn a positive engagement to send me to her in the winter months. "Though Putney is not St. James's-street," adds she, "I so manage, that it is always next door to any public amusements I like: and as Leonora will expect to see Lunnun next winter, as a young woman, you may be

sure of my not being a *house dove.*' To say the truth," continued she, "I think people gain nothing by giving up the pleasures of youth, supposing always they are innocent. Who would believe Lady Maclairn, for example, was not much more than three years older than I; and when I try to recall her beauty and cheerful temper to my memory as they struck me when I first knew her, I can hardly believe she is the Harriet Flamall every body was in love with. To be sure youth *have* its hour, but cheerfulness will last to all seasons, if people do not starve it out by indolence. However," added she, "poor Harriet *have* had trials I never had; and between ourselves, I have heard my aunt Priscilla say, that she was early in life doomed to sorrow, from the death of a young man she loved." We have had many such conversations as these in our walks; for I devote my mornings to Lady Maclairn's service. Mrs. Serge is delighted with Mrs. Wilson, and no less pleased with

my friends at the cottages, to whom she has been liberal in her donations. But with all my labours I can perceive that she is heartily tired of being at Tarefield; and yesterday she consulted me very gravely on the propriety of requesting that Caroline might remain at the Hall during her excursion to the lakes. "I have no doubt," added she with alacrity and contentment, "of Mr. Serge's preferring to stay with Caroline. Lydia shall remain also, to amuse her; and Mr. Maclairn will not refuse to squire us: The coach will just hold us, and we shall have a charming *frolic!*" For a moment I felt angry, but the innocence of heart, which is the companion of this weak head, softened me. I with all gentleness, therefore, hinted at the appearance of unkindness and indifference which the proposal of itself would convey to the mind of her daughter; and withal asserted, that I knew Mr. Maclairn had engagements, which would prevent his leaving Tarefield for

any time. "That is unlucky," replied she; "and since matters do not favour our scheme it may be as well to say nothing about it. I should have liked to give you a frolic, I am sure you have not too much pleasure here; but trust to me for next winter: you shall see Lucy, if it cost me a journey for myself to fetch you. I have not forgot my young days yet, nor what young folks like." I could not be angry, Lucy. I answered her intention, and thanked her for her kindness, telling her also very civilly, that I had been frequently months at a time in London during the winter, but that I had never regretted the absence of London amusements at Tarefield. She lifted up her hands and eyes, and said I amazed her. I quitted her during her surprise, saying I was going to sit with Miss Serge an hour.

In continuation.—I am just returned from visiting the poor declining Caroline. She is a modest unaffected young woman, and resembles her youngest sister. I think her features are still more regular than hers, and her large black eyes more expressive, from the languor of sickness that softens down their jetty lustre. I fancy too she is naturally fairer than Leonora, at least her paleness indicates a clearer complexion. She is extremely defective in her shape: I do not recollect having seen a person more crooked; and I cannot help thinking the dreadful spasms in her stomach have originated in the distortion of her shape, and from the compression it is doomed to suffer. She was in her easy chair, and the emblem of neatness: the room in exact order, and at her hand a book. I congratulated her on her exemption from pain, and told her that our favourite, Doctor Douglass, was in danger of being spoiled by our gratitude for hav-

ing relieved her. She meekly bowed, and, thanking me, spoke of Lady Maclairn's kindness, and the fatigue she had so unfortunately introduced. "I was entirely governed by my wishes to oblige my parents," added she, "in hazarding a journey; being convinced that I can expect no benefit to accrue to me from leaving Putney. But it amuses my family, and diverts my dear father's thoughts from an event which he considers with too much tenderness and grief. I am pleased by Doctor Douglass's frankness," continued she; "he honestly owns, that he sees no advantage for me in travelling; and he has contrived to convince my friends that I cannot be better than *at home*. They do not understand him; *but I do*, Miss Cowley." You will suppose my reply. "You read sometimes, I see," said I, taking up the volume on the table: it was the Economy of Human Life. "My little library contains some authors who

will not disgrace yours. I will bring the catalogue." "Your recommendation of one will suffice," answered she, pensively smiling, "for I am not able to read much. My father reads frequently to me; and if you will favour me with any periodical work I shall be obliged to you; he is fond of works of that sort." I promised to send the "Mirror" to her room, she not having read it; and I quitted her in a proper frame of mind to visit Miss Flint. She appears to me to be considerably mended in her health, and she was more cheerful than I have seen her for a long time. I always thought solitude a good remedy for those who could not enjoy society, or rather who spoiled it. She was chatty, and of course I was not ill humoured. She asked me many questions relative to our guests; and particularly whether the "table was abundant and handsome." "I hope it is so," added she; "for I was explicit with Harriet

that point. Her friends' entertainment hall consider as my concern; under roof it ought to be so." "I only you could contrive to share in your pitality below stairs," observed I, "I certain it might be effected without to you, or trouble to the servants, e than one five minutes would accom- ." She shook her head, and said was fearful of breaking into the regi- which the doctor had prescribed, and which she trusted for some relief; hat since Mrs. Allen had so kindly ted her time to her, she had all the ort her situation needed. "How- " added she, "I should be vexed ese good people fancied I shunned from pride; and I think I am equal ceiving them as tea-visitors; will you ose it to them, when you think the emen will be absent." "Let it be vening then," replied I with gaiety:

"you will find that company will not lessen your hopes from an abstemious diet." She consented, and I left her to announce my commission.

In continuation. — *Wednesday morning.* We assembled yesterday in Miss Flint's *state* apartment: even the poor Caroline was of the party. The first *coup d'œil* convinced me that Miss Flint had not quite done with this vain world: all was in state; and the heiress of Tarefield, in a fine muslin wrapping gown trimmed with lace, received us with much ceremony, but with no want of kindness. Lady Maclairn officiated at the tea-table; and Mrs. Serge, whose attention had been much engaged with the various decorations of the room, now suddenly surveying the ponderous *silver* tea-board and tea-kettle, *wondered*, according to custom, that her ladyship did not exchange that heavy old fashioned plate for what was

tasty and "*helegant.*" Miss Flint, with a spice of her ancient asperity, observed, that it had been long in the Flint family, and she preferred it to more modern. "I beg your pardon," replied the unconscious offender, "I did not know it belonged to you, madam; but I cannot unsay what I have said. I know some folks think old-fashioned plate honourable to themselves, as it proves their family's opulence; but for my part, it is not my notion that honour depend upon any such things. I lately sold a silver bowl which held three gallons, that had been my great-grandfather's. You Lady Maclairn," added she, laughing, "being of the Hatchway family: you will, perhaps, blame me; for it was an *onourable* bowl, as I can affirm. It was a present from the ship's *bowners*, for his fighting with a privateer and sinking her: the whole story was engraved on the *rim*, with the names of the '*bow-*

ners,' and of the ship my great grandfather saved from the enemy." "I certainly should have preserved it," replied Lady Maclairn, "as an evidence so honourable to the captain's bravery, and his employers' gratitude." Dear me!" answered she, "who trouble themselves with things of this sort after they are past away a little while! It was quite useless to me, so I exchanged it fot a "*bapron*" and some egg-cups, with other trifles." The sauey Leonora laughed immoderately. "You ought to say, my dear madam, an *epargne*." Without a muscle of my face being moved, "I beg your pardon, said I, but as the word is a French one, a stranger to the language may excuse the liberty of being corrected in the pronouncing it. *Epargner*, means to save, or to spare, and this elegant ornament for a table is not misnamed; for it is commonly filled with trifles which cost but little to the

nor of a feast." "Thank you, my ır Miss Cowley," said she, with per- t good humour, "you have taught : what I did not know before; and if ɔra had employed her knowledge of the ench tongue as well, she would not have sgraced her *heducation*, by laughing at r mother." Leonora blushed, and swered that she had called it an *ergne* constantly in her hearing, but ɔught she might be deemed *imper- ıent* to carry her "*critique*" farther. Rather say, child," replied the good- ıtured mother, "that you did not wish e to understand *beparner* was *to save*, ɜt, like your Lady Gudgeon, I should udge you clean gloves, and fill, as she , my *beparner* with wax oranges and ap- es." It was now her turn to laugh, ıd we gave no offence by joining in her irth. A rubber of "*Vhisk*" completed e evening; and Miss Flint, graciously

thanking her for her company, saw us depart without any signs of being fatigued by her exertions.

Next Tuesday we are to go to Durham to pass the day. Mrs. Serge has wisely given up the project of seeing the lakes; and as something must be done to please her, Lady Maclairn has promised to accompany her in this jaunt. If you are not grateful, so much the worse; for not only *time*, but labour is lost to

Your

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLII.

From the same to the same.

OUR good doctor will have a more rich and costly offering from the grateful Mr. Serge, than any that ostentation or superstition ever gave to Esculapius, or to any saint in the Roman calendar, if he can manage to keep his patient as many years as he has done hours from the cruel invader, pain. Yet I am angry with Douglass's honesty; he tells me that this poor girl cannot live long; and that even the medicine we fancy so efficacious, will soon lose its benign effect. "She knows her condition," added he with sympathy, "and has only the wish of seeing her father more reconciled to the thoughts of losing her; but we must let him en-

joy the present, and trust for the future to that Being who will support him."

The day before yesterday, Miss Leonora and myself went to Bishop's-Auckland for an airing. The dapper Mr. William Willet, Mr. Serge's servant, attended us: and I, very successfully, conducted the whisky to Mrs. Crofts' door. The good old lady received us with great kindness; and after making a few purchases, her daughter attended us to the circulating library, the principal object with Miss Nora. We found this shop was in the same street with Susan Crofts', and its rival for smartness. My companion, who had languished for *books* at the Hall, instantly proceeded to make an ample selection. Scores were produced *that had been read*—a *score at least* put aside for her use; and I thought our business finished here, when Miss Leonora accidentally took up a new novel which "she had been *dying* to see for a month;"

at the third volume was in circula-
on: it was hourly expected, however,
d the shopman would send it with the
irth and last. This civility would not
. The young lady could not wait: she
uld purchase the work rather than
t have it: she should be quite miserable
t to take it home with her, her curio-
y having been excited by seeing it with-
her reach. "Has any of your neigh-
urs this book, Mr. Type?" asked Miss
ofts; "perhaps, by sending, you might
t the volume for the young lady." "He
uld endeavour: a gentleman at the Mitre
d hired it the preceding day, and per-
ps he had done with it." He alertly
pped to the door to cross to the inn,
ien, as quickly returning to make way
the envied possessor of the third vo-
ne, he began to urge his request, and
young lady's wishes for the complete
of the work. A graceful compliance
lowed from a very handsome man of

about thirty; and who, addressing me, very gallantly declared that "he was *inexpressibly flattered* in contributing in the smallest degree to *Miss Cowley*'s wishes and pleasure. *Miss Cowley*, who saw no necessity for incurring an obligation where the obliger had so manifest an advantage over her, in regard to his knowledge of her name, only coldly bowed, and said that not having any peculiar interest to gratify by his politeness, she would refer him to her young friend for those thanks due for his indulgence of her curiosity. "*I* am indeed, sir," said Miss Serge, "extremely obliged to you; but I shall not long detain the work, for I read very quick. *To-morrow evening* they will be returned, or the next morning at *furthest*." He bowed, and we left the shop, ordering the books to Susan Crofts'. In our way I asked Susan the name of this civil gentleman who had been so ready to contribute to "Miss Cowley's" happiness. "He was a stranger,

lately come to Bishop's-Aukland. He lodged at the Mitre Inn, she believed, for she had seen him there several times within a day or two, and she thought him a very handsome man." "I think he has a very good person," replied I. "He thinks so himself, I am certain," observed Miss Nora, "by the elaborate pains he takes to display it." I made no answer, for I perceived that gratitude had not banished the young lady's displeasure, in having been overlooked for the gentleman's "Miss Cowley." Mrs. Crofts in our absence had sent for my frost-bitten friends from their school, and had set out her cake and wine, whilst Willet was stowing the cargo of books in the vehicle, and waiting with it at the door. My greetings with the children detained me some little time: I did not perceive even that my companion had quitted the parlour till I rose to depart; but concluded, when I did miss her, that she was in the shop.

I was mistaken, she was not there; but approaching the door, expecting to find her by the carriage, I saw her coming from Mr. Type's with hasty steps. On expressing my surprise at her absence, she told me that she had fortunately discovered, in taking out her purse to pay Miss Crofts, that she had left her pocket-book on the bookseller's counter, "and judging it the securest method, I went for it myself," added she; "luckily I found it, exactly as I supposed, concealed by the books I had rejected. Only think! That coxcomb was still in the shop. How fortunate that he did not see it!" I smiled, for I saw through this little coquetry. "It would not have been pleasant to me, I do assure you," pursued she, "to have seen it in his hands; for one does not write one's thoughts for every eye. Neither do I believe it would have pleased Mr. Malcolm to have seen this beau at the Hall on the pretence of giving *you* your strayed

—" I do not see the drift of your
" replied I ; " for what concern
Maclairn have had in a busi-
clusively yours? However, I
ou have recovered your book,
the gentleman the trouble of
he Hall."—" We might, not-
g, have made such a visit a
or ourselves," answered she
; " for, to speak the truth, I
lover would not be the worse
jealousy. He is too secure;
he hopes and anxieties of *la*
to rouse him: You really
s though brother and sister. I
ive how you contrive to keep
erfulness at Tarefield: what
prudent lover, and the sober
he Hall, I think you as much
d as I am." " Much the
wered I, laughing;" for my
re as imaginary as your own.
country, and the retirement at

the Hall; and I am attached to its inmates. I am so completely Malcolm Maclairn's *sister* that I am his chief confident, and he reads his love letters to me. He will soon, I trust, be married to a very amiable, deserving young lady, to whom he has been attached several years: she resides with her mother in this neighboured; but she is at present from home." "Good heavens!" exclaimed Miss Nord with a pretty theatrical air, "you make me envy this Phillis! With such a swain as Mr. Maclairn, and with a mind suitable to her situation in life, and the society in which she will probably pass all her days, how happy is her condition when compared with mine!" "Miss Heartley," replied I, "has been educated by a mother who has prepared her to act properly in every society and situation in life. Mrs. Heartley has lived in the world, and is a superior woman." "My lot, then," said she, "is misery to this young

lady's!" She spoke with emotion. "Do not answer me," continued she, "till you have reflected on my reasons for discontent. With an education which has taught me to blush at ignorance, and to be offended by vulgarity; accustomed to enjoy with girls of fashion, rank, and fortune, the advantages and the hopes which have resulted from my situation with them; I am now doomed to live in a society, in which I am hourly exposed to give offence and to be offended. Be ingenuous, my dear Miss Cowley! Tell me, do you think that seven years and more passed in one of the first schools in town, can have rendered me a fit inmate for my father's house, or a suitable companion for my mother's acquaintance? I read in your countenance that my appeal has reached your heart. Can you be surprised that I am disgusted and repining in parties composed of shopkeepers and their wives, masters of ships, and gen-

teel people who, in my mother's dialect, live "right up," viz. on their little fortune, and who, fancying they are *gentry*, because they have no longer the drudgery of opening a shop and standing behind its counter, affect airs truly ridiculous, and even sickening to me. It was entirely owing to Caroline's influence with my father that we came hither, instead of being dragged down to Y—m—th with a party of my mother's "*hold*" friends, Mr. Crimp the coal merchant and his family; and it was not without some difficulty that we prevailed on my mother to give up the *tower* of Norfolk which these her *hold* friends had proposed. But I would have died sooner than have submitted! I have met with mortifications at Bath, which will prevent my having the folly of ever being seen again in a place of public resort without proper introduction! This was a fear I never experienced at school, when looking forwards

to my freedom from its confinement. *Miss Serge*, the contracter's daughter, was there on a level with the first girls in the house: nor was there one pupil in it whose masters were more liberally paid, for my mother chose I should make them presents every vacation; and she was equally attentive to secure me favour with the governess and teachers. Amongst the girls to whom I was particularly attached were the two Miss Gudgeons. Their father Sir Ambrose was dead; and their mother, Lady Gudgeon, lived too gay a life to think much of their comforts or wants. Almira Gudgeon confided to me her discontents and difficulties; and in return she shared my purse. It grieved me to leave her at school during the holidays; and on my mentioning to my father and mother those neglected girls, they invited them to Putney the following vacation. Lady Gudgeon made no objection; and from that time my friends always accom-

panied me home. Last midsummer they were removed from school, and sent down to their mother's house in Berkshire. From this place I received poor Almira's melancholy letters: though then turned of seventeen, she lived immured at the Dale with no other company than that of her sister, an old nurse, and the gardener's family. The winter approached, and I had the pleasure of hearing that my beloved Almira and her sister would be *brought out* at Bath, as soon as the Birth Day was over. Lady Gudgeon having been with them for a week, and finding Clara in danger of growing too fat, had engaged to introduce her with her sister, on condition that she left off suppers and took more exercise. You may judge of the joy I felt on gaining my mother's promise of taking me to Bath; and the still greater satisfaction I had on finding that Lydia was included in the family party, instead of being left with me at Mrs.

S——'s, as preparatory to reconciling her to the confinement and instruction she was thought to want. I had foreseen the ridicule I must have braved; and with a heart exulting at this escape, and palpitating with expected pleasure, and the hope of meeting my friends, we reached Bath, and settled ourselves on the South Parade.

"In a few days after our arrival Lady Gudgeon's name appeared on the list of new comers, and my joy was complete. Her ladyship's condescension enchanted my mother; and kind hearted as she is, the Miss Gudgeons constantly received from her hands tickets for the play, and their mother found a carriage at her command. During the space of three weeks, or a month, we constantly made one party. I saw my mother nightly paying for her lessons at Lady Gudgeon's *vingt-et-une* table; but of what importance was a little money to my father? Yet he appeared every

day to like the Gudgeons less and less; and at length forbad my mother's playing cards at the Rooms with her ladyship, or going to her parties at home. On some occasions it is in vain to reason with my father. My mother submitted, and I was told that my young friends were silly, giddy girls, who did me no good. I perfectly understood that my father had judged with precision on Clara Gudgeon's character; for I knew she was deceitful and selfish, and she had shown herself to me in her true colours from the first ball in which I had been noticed for my dancing. I also was no stranger to her malice from the time her favourite Captain Fairly became attentive and polite to me. Caroline's increasing illness at this juncture prevented our amusements, and gave an ostensible reason for my mother's declining Lady Gudgeon's invitations. At length Caroline was better; and my mother joined a family party, who lodged at the next

house, and with whom my father was become very sociable. As I had been engaged to dance with Captain Fairly at this ball, I was not willing to be disappointed; and knowing that I should meet the Miss Gudgeons, I meant to join them, when at the Rooms. My mother had already placed herself at a card-table with her new acquaintance when Lady Gudgeon entered the room. Following the example of the young lady, my companion, I kept close by my mother's side, waiting for Captain Fairly's summons. 'How is this, my dear Mrs. Serge?' cried Lady Gudgeon, advancing towards her with a smile; 'you here! and a deserter! But you will find your place, when your rubber is up.'—'I thank your ladyship,' replied my unembarrassed mother, 'but, to tell you the truth, I do not like your game so well as *vbist*, for I do not so well understand it.' A stifled titter from the surrounding groupe followed this speech. 'As

you please, *Mrs. Serge,*' answered her ladyship, moving on without deigning to notice me, or the smile of contempt from those she passed. She took her post, opened the cards, and sent for her daughters. They had, I presume, their instructions; for in passing me they did not see me, and in repassing me I was saluted with a broad stare and a giggle, which I had seen too often practised not to comprehend. I was prepared for the neglect I met with in the dance. The Miss Gudgeons neither spoke nor deigned to turn hands with me, and whilst their heads were adorned with feathers and turbands of my giving, their looks of scorn cut me to the soul. Captain Fairly saw my distress, and their rudeness; and said something to Clara on her carelessness in the dance. With an insolent laugh she asked him whether his credit was out with his old taylor, that he so diligently courted a new one. This was too much for me

to bear, and I gave up dancing for the remainder of the evening. But my mortifications were not yet finished. After having heard my mother annouce that *arts* were trumps, seen her mark her *onours*, and win the rubber, although she had the curse of Scotland every time in her *and*, the party broke up, and the lady proposed going into the ball room to give her daughter a caution to dance no more. On entering it I was astonished to see my good father quietly standing, with his two thumbs hooked under each arm, and enjoying the sight of the dancers. He expressed his surprise at finding me idle, and said he had come on purpose to see me dance, having left Caroline *purely*. Fairly urged me to go down the dance then commencing, and encouraged by him, I was determined to show my spirit. In our way we encountered Miss Clara Gudgeon. 'By your leave, fair lady,' cried

my father, bustling through the groupe. 'Bless me!' said Miss Clara, 'is it you Mr. Serge? Are you come 'to see fashions?'—'Even so,' replied he, 'but if you are of my mind you will think those at Putney as good as any here, and, for ought I can see, you footed it away in my parlour with ten couple as merrily as you do here. But where is Almira? I hope she has her Putney holiday face; for yours seems as clouded as when your six weeks' gambols finished with us.' 'I really cannot direct you, sir,' answered she, retreating; 'but if you cannot see *her*, she will undoubtedly soon perceive you.' A loud laugh, and a disdainful toss of her head accompanied this speech; but my father, not conceiving that her intention could be uncivil, went on searching for Almira, till I told him that they had been offended by my mother's not joining her ladyship's party. He

only nodded, and said it was all very well. From this time the Gudgeons were strangers to us; and because Captain Fairly chose to be civil they *cut him*. He laughed at their impertinence; but I had no pleasure at Bath after this, as you may imagine."

In my animadversions on Miss Leonora's little narrative you will not suspect me of sparing the Gudgeon family; and I added, that neither the simplicity of her father, nor her mother's provincial dialect would stand in her way with the discriminating and the virtuous. "It is easy to think, and to say this," replied she with vivacity, "when we are remote from the regrets and dissatisfactions of living with those who can neither guide nor improve us: who do not even know when they wound, nor can comprehend why they offend. If I sing I am asked whether it be a psalm or song, and they

wish for Alley Croaker, God save the King, or Black-eyed Susan. If I play, it must be Handel's Water Piece or the Variations of Nancy Dawson. Oh! you know not the misery," added she, bursting into tears, "of being doomed to live with those who are perpetually disgusting our taste, opposing our feelings, and contradicting by their habits and modes of life those which more refinement have rendered necessary and essential to our comfort! - Indeed, Miss Cowley, I speak from bitter experience; and I sometimes wish that, like Lydia, I had been kept at home, and been happy in ignorance." I was struck by her acuteness, and moved by her distress; and with much seriousness I exhorted her to correct a sensibility which tended more to cherish a fastidious refinement of feeling, than a love for what was commendable. "Believe me, my dear young friend," added I, "that although

not educated as a girl at a fashionable boarding school, nor in Lady Gudgeon's societies, your father's character has been perfectly understood by me, you will find in him your pride and boast, by weighing his trifling defects with his integrity and uprightness of heart." "I know his worth," replied she, weeping, "he must be loved; but what will you say for my mother?"—"What I really think," replied I, "and must ever think, till I find out, that a little knowledge is judged to be an equivalent for a base mind. I would rather, a thousand times over, be Mrs. Serge's child than Lady Gudgeon's; and I would convince the world by my respect to such a parent that I was qualified to appreciate what was really estimable in it; and by my resentment check the idle laugh of those, more incorrigible in their ignorance than the object they contemned: for it must

be allowed, at least, that Mrs. Serge is not *conceited.* Your education has been liberal," continued I; " you have endowments which your mother has not; and for a plain reason, she had not the means of acquiring them. Show your parents that their kindness has not been thrown away; and above all things manifest to others that you are superior to the ingratitude and meanness of despising your benefactors, because they happen to be less fashionable than yourself in the cut of their garment or in their address."

We now entered the avenue, and Leonora composed her pretty face, saying, with a deep sigh, that she wanted a true friend! I silently agreed with her. I leave to Mary the profound reflections which this little airing has brought forward in my mind; it not being my business to reason, but to detail. Heathcot

and its inhabitants must not engage me a moment longer; for I am Lady Maclairn's "right hand."

Yours ever,

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. Mrs. Allen sends you her blessing. She is Miss Flint's *right hand*, and comforter to boot: but when, and where is it that she fails in goodness?

LETTER XLIII.

From the same to the same.

Saturday evening.

A DELUGE of rain has fallen here since last night; of course we have all been stationary to-day. My spirits rose, however, before dinner on seeing our doctor enter in his oiled surtout, like

Jests." Caroline's black eyes wanted not spirit, when with resentment and vexation she asked where she had picked up such trash. "Trash!" repeated Lydia, "I do not know what you mean by trash! It will not make you cry, as that book *have* done. I am sure, when we read this, we laughed till our sides ached." "*We!*" echoed Caroline, "who do you mean?" "Why Willet, and Mrs. Patty, and ———," she hesitated,—"and Mr. William." "Why will you thus grieve me, Lydia? Why will you thus force me to grieve your dear father," said Caroline, "do you not know that he is displeased when you seek your society in the servants' hall? Did William give you that book?" "Lord! no," answered Miss Lydia with terror. "I found it in Jacob's coat pocket, he only read *here* and *there* a bit." "And did you not blush, Lydia, when you produced a book purloined from a postillion's pocket, which a better

informed servant saw was not proper for him to read to females, even of his own class?" "How should I know that?" replied she. "You know, I suppose, that you have been forbidden to talk with your father's postillions, to frequent the kitchen, or to take the lead in the servants'-hall. Willet also knows my father's commands; but enough of this: I shall inform him they are disobeyed." Miss Lydia burst into tears, and, imploring her sister to say nothing of this matter, she faithfully promised to restore the book to its owner by means of the cook maid, and never to go near the servants'-hall again. This contest had too much fretted poor Caroline. I saw that she was again in pain, and pretending to more industry than I had, I helped Lydia to finish the trimming business; leaving the invalid to recover her tranquillity. The poor girl amazed at my condescension, asked whether I did all my own *jobs*; for

she concluded that Miss Cowley had been at a London boarding school, because she played on the harp.

Tell me in your next that you have had enough of my talents in the gossiping way. I have only to fear that Horace will suspect my understanding is in its retrogade motion, for I have not written to him this last fortnight a letter which would not disgrace a Miss in her Teens. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." This is not my apology: but folly is catching, and you have betrayed me into such an observance of it, that I yesterday, without reflection, began a speech with "all *mander* of persons." So look to the consequences of my readiness to assume any form or language, my Lucy prescribes for her

Faithful,

RACHEL COWLEY.

In continuation.—I am inclined to believe that Miss Leonora is emulous of rivalling her grandmamma, Mrs. Hatchway, in her hairbreadth escapes by sea and land. Whilst I thought her shut up in her room, and *devouring* Monimia, the heroine of a good novel intitled the Manor-House, she was in the avenue enjoying a shower-bath. In returning, completely drenched, her mother perceived her from the window, and as I conceived, unseasonably stopped her in her way to dry her clothes, by an angry lecture on her folly and heedlessness. "I am not surprised," added she, in a sharp tone, "that I cannot keep a laundry-maid: six or eight white dresses in a week to wash would tire any one's patience."

It is probable the lecture would have concluded with this notable observation, had not Mrs. Serge unluckily perceived at this instant the lamentable breach which the brambles had made in the costly deep

lace which trimmed Miss Leonora's pelisse. "I don't believe," exclaimed she, surveying the mischief, "there is on the face of the whole earth your *bequal*, Nora! Your hextravagance is enough to discredit a polite *beducation!* Though your father is a rich man he has something better to do with his money than to buy you every month a twenty guinea lace. Here's a sight! It would provoke a saint! One would think you had not *common sense* to walk in the pouring rain, and through *edges* and ditches with a new thirty-pound *pelisse.*" Miss Nora laughed, not without contempt. "Never mind," said she, rudely, snatching the tattered and wet pelisse from her mother's hand, "it is only another evidence that the Serges with all their wealth are too poor for the purchase of common sense, or good manners:" then, with a curtsey to Lady Maclairn, she retired to change her dress. Mrs. Serge, with an heightened colour

following her steps. I believe this *brouillerie* became more serious in their apartment. The young lady did not appear at the dining table, and Mrs. Serge's fair face still glowed. "Where is Nora?" asked the father, adjusting his napkin under his chin. "Does she dine with Caroline?" "No," replied the wife, "she is busy drying the books Sam has brought her from the library, they are as wet as water can make them, and she has had enough of the rain for one day." Her folly was related with some asperity, and the postillion's drenched condition described. Mr. Serge wished that neither had taken cold; and with a placid air took his soup. When the heroine appeared, she was in perfect good humour; but I perceived that she had been weeping, and look fatigued; something of a deprecating tone and pensive air soon produced their effect on the relenting mother, and all was har-

mony in the evening. I chanced to ask her what new novels had been sent her from the library. "I have not examined the parcel," replied she with some emotion, "for I have for once discovered that there are certain frames of mind in which a novel cannot be read with either amusement or interest: besides," added she, "I have been teazed with a pain in my teeth, which will be attributed to my morning ramble, notwithstanding I have felt it more than a week:" then turning to Malcolm, with more coquetry than I had ever observed in her manner, she with a sweet smile asked him to prescribe for her; and directed his attention to a tooth as the one which she suspected was diseased. I could not preserve my gravity on seeing the *sang froid* with which Malcolm examined the most beautiful mouth nature could form, and the delight which Mr. Serge manifested at his Nora's choice

of a doctor; who with the solemnity of an old nurse acquitted the spotless tooth, and ordered some whey on going to bed.

"It is ten to one," observed Mrs. Serge with good humour, "whether even your remedy, *doctor*, will remove her cold in one night: it will not surprise me that she is laid up for a week." "Why will you anticipate disappointment for her?" asked Mr. Serge, "it will be sufficient when it arrives, and if she cannot see Durham to-morrow, she must take the punishment of her heedlessness; but I warrant the tooth will be well with a good night's sleep."—"I had settled with Caroline, before my offence of the morning had made the excursion to Durham a doubt," answered Leonora, "to remain with her, thinking my sister Lydia would be amused by the jaunt; and to be honest, I confess I have no hope of being quit of a cold that I am sensible is the effect of my indiscretion." "Yes,"

observed Miss Lydia, "it was settled I should go last Monday, but you know, Nora, you promised to contrive that I should ride in the phaeton, and I would rather stay at home than go in the coach. I am always so deadly sick in a coach, that I hate them." "Nonsense!" cried the mother, "that is a new fagary. You never complained in a close carriage till the phaeton was bought." "Well, my love," observed the placid Mr. Serge, "but as pleasure is the purposed end of our little journey, why should not Lydia have a share of it unmixed, and as our dear girls have agreed in this business, we will manage so as to please Lydia. You will not refuse your assistance, my dear Malcolm," added he, smiling: "you shall have the daughter instead of the father to conduct." Malcolm accepted of the exchange with good humour; and all were contented.

I have had so much business of late on

hands that I believe I have not men-
ed the increasing good understanding
ch subsists between Malcolm and Mr.
y, our new curate. He is become
equent and welcome vistor here, and
acquisition we all enjoy. Malcolm
I suspect, given him a hint that his
ient duty requires assistance; and most
redly he finds in Parry an excellent
djutor. The baronet enjoys his con-
nation, and Mr. Serge is no burden to
. I foresee we shall not need Parry
to-morrow's excursion. The rain is
r pouring down in torrents, and it is
lnight. May Heaven guard your pil-
', my Lucy, with its accustomed
ndness! Mary shall have my journal of
Durham expedition in due time.

Yours, &c.

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLIV.

From the same to the same.

THE interruption in my usual punctuality, my dear friend, and which has alarmed your too tender fears, induces me to write to you without delay, for the express purpose of assuring you that I am perfectly well; and that in my failure during a few posts nothing has occurred to disturb me beyond the concern I have been under for the happiness of those around me. It is not too much to take for granted that you have long since perceived in Miss Leonora Serge's character and opinions certain indications that will prepare you for the recital of her premeditated, and by this time *successful* jour-

ney to Gretna-Green. But as in your code of laws, and modes of instruction Mary will stand no chance of being an adept in the science of intrigue, duplicity, and cunning, it may not be useless to place before her an example so calculated to impress on her mind the delightful gratifications, enjoyed by the girl of spirit, who prefers running away from the restraints of parental care, giving up all the decencies of her sex and condition, and proclaiming to the world that she is void of feeling and principle, in order to attain the man whom she loves for having betrayed her to scorn and ruin.

As I predicted in my last letter, the weather prevented our going to Durham. Miss Nora's tooth-ach became a sore throat, and a slight fever. She was of course an invalid, and poor Sam, the postillion, had more than one drenching commission. Wednesday we had a sun unclouded; and on Thursday we set

out for Durham with a doubtful sky, and an oppressive heat in the air. Miss Lydia, stuffed into her mother's pea green riding dress, took her allotted station in the phaeton with Malcolm, with an alacrity and contentment of heart that paid her good father for the sacrifice of his pleasure. Douglas in the curricle with Sir Murdoch, left us nothing to wish for him. Lady Maclairn, your Rachel, and Mr. and Mrs. Serge, had Mr. Parry for their beau; and I saw with pleasure her ladyship cheerfully sustaining her part in this arduous trial of her strength, in an undertaking so averse to her habits of life. The sun favoured the out-riders till we reached Durham. The delicate Lady Maclairn preferring the office of *Caterer*, to a sultry walk, was fortunately left at the inn to quiet and repose, whilst we sallied forth to see the public places; but I believe that in reaching them we saw all that was worthy of notice in the

town; and a burst of thunder, and a black cloud, warned us to return with all speed to the shelter of our inn. Happily for us, a deluge of rain spared our timid friends from the terrors of the thunder storm; and ourselves from the pain of seeing them in hysterics, as well as we from any further exhibition at Durham. A card-table and chess-board, with a sumptuous dinner filled up our *pleasurable* time. But no felicity is permanent! Even a party of pleasure is liable to vexations. Lydia's enjoyment of the dessert was interrupted by an altercation between her father and herself. He insisted on her returning home in the coach, urging the dampness of the evening. Miss Lydia contended that the rain had made the evening fair, and much pleasanter than the morning. Mr. Serge was firm, and the pouting girl was forced to yield to his authority. It would have been as well had the young lady been

indulged; for it was proved *demonstratively*, that a close carriage did not agree with Miss Lydia Serge: and although we did not concur with her in calling Mr. Serge 'ill-natured and obstinate,' we could not but allow, that less pertinacity on his part would have been *discreet*, and Mrs. Serge's lecture on *gluttony* as well spared for another time and season.

On the carriage's driving up to the hall-door I was shocked on seeing Mrs. Allen advancing with precipitation to meet us: she was weeping; and in evident distress stopped to speak with Malcolm and Mr. Serge; who in a moment endeavoured to quit the phaeton exclaiming aloud, "She is dead! my child is dead!" and Malcolm, giving the rains to a servant, sprang from the carriage and entered the house. Whilst Mrs. Allen in vain repeated to the poor father, "No, no, my good sir: hear me." You will judge that this consternation was not long to be endured.

Malcolm's absence was but momentary. "They are alarmed within," said he aloud; and he added with assumed composure, "Miss Leonora is missing; she has probably sheltered in the neighbourhood: I am going at *Miss Serge*'s request to seek her, there having been some blundering as to the road which Miss Leonora indicated on leaving the house for a walk." So saying this, Malcolm leaped into the curricle and disappeared. "I see how it is," observed Mr. Serge, panting for breath, "all is clear! but God is merciful! Let me go to my Caroline, let me see my comfort, my darling, and then I shall be patient." Doctor Douglas prevented him, by arguing the danger of agitating her spirits still more than they had been, and we conducted the trembling father into the dining-parlour; Mrs. Allen attending Douglas to Caroline's room. Mrs. Serge had, with the astonishment which the scene had produced, lost

apparently, the use of her tongue and powers of reflection. On reaching the parlour she burst into tears; and with more of resentment than despair, observed, that she was only sorry Mr. Maclairn had so much trouble; for she doubted not but Leonora would be at the Hall as soon as himself. "This is her penitence!" continued she; "because I was angry with her for walking in the rain she has stopped at some house, and is, perhaps, laughing at our fears." "Before you are too sanguine in your hopes, Mrs. Serge," said her husband, with much coldness of manner, "it may not be amiss to know when she left this house; and what grounds those whom she has quitted have for their suspicions," Mrs. Warner was summoned. Her evidence consisted in the following particulars. Miss Nora soon after we had left the Hall changed her dress; for Warner met her in the garden at one o'clock equipped for a journey,

and with some surprise observed that if she meant to take an airing she would be disappointed, as Mr. Willet was gone with his sister, for the day, to see the castle, and had taken the only horse and carriage remaining, which was the little market cart. The young lady said that she had only thought of a walk in the avenue; but she believed it would be wiser to stay at home, for there would certainly be a thunder shower. "She sauntered with me into the vestibule," continued Warner, "when seeing your shawl, madam," addressing Mrs. Serge, "which you omitted to take with you for Miss Lydia's use, she wrapped it round her, and said she would venture a little way, for she was half dead for want of exercise; and away she tripped, promising not to lose sight of the cottage on the green, which is not a quarter of a mile from hence, hinting that she had promised the old woman who lives there a trifle for

her grandchild. I thought no more of the young lady," continued Warner, "till the storm came on, when Mrs. Allen came to see whether she was with Miss Flint or in her own room; saying that Miss Serge wished for her sister's company, as she was a coward when it thundered. We were sadly perplexed, madam. Having no man-servant, but the gardener and his lad, at hand, and the thunder was dreadful here: so Mrs. Allen, trusting to Miss Nora's promise to me, waited a while, saying she was certain it was better that she should remain sheltered in the cottage than to venture home in such a tempest. The rain soon abated, and we sent the gardener with an umbrella to Dame Bank's. She had not seen the lady. You may judge of our fright! The gardner and his son were sent different ways to no purpose. About two hours since they returned in consequence of news they had picked up at the Ram. A

traveller who had entered the house during the storm had seen a lady hastening to a chaise and four that stood on the road to Durham. She was assisted by a gentleman, and rather flew than walked to the carriage. She had something white on her head and shoulders, and the gentleman was in scarlet. Whilst they were talking with Hunt and this stranger, Tom Hunt entered. He had passed the chaise on leaving Durham, and had seen the lady in white, but not her face: she seemed to be sleeping on the gentleman's shoulder. "My lady," added Warner, "is sadly ruffled and distressed by this disaster; and if Mrs. Allen had not been with Miss Serge, God knows what would have been the event of a day so dreadful as this has been! My lady and Mrs. Allen only fear they have done wrong, in not sending an express to Durham, as soon as the men returned; but as so much time had been lost, and they

hoped you would not be late on the road, they gave up the thought; and, indeed, it was impossible to have gained any advantage from pursuing it." "You say truly, my good woman," observed Mr. Serge, with suppressed agony, "The child who forsakes a parent's protection cannot be benefited by being pursued. But repentance will overtake her. No, she is gone, gone for ever!" added he rising and pacing the room!—Lady Maclairn retired with Warner. Again the poor old man quitted his seat, and deliberately taking off his wig, wiped his head and eyes. "Where is the heart, Miss Cowley," said he, "that would not bleed to see such a girl as my Nora thus lost, thus betrayed to folly and wretchedness? Poor creature!" added he, "how hard is thy fate! A mere babe, as one may say, thus to be ensnared and deluded! Thus to be the victim of designs, which a highway robber would scorn, as beneath him. But to the villain who has

robbed me of my child, will I place the pangs I feel; God learnt from that child the knowledge of my sufferings!" He was silent for some time, nor did his lady attempt to comfort him: she appeared stupified by the blow, and I trembled for her safety. On seeing me apply my salts to relieve her, he again rose and said to her, "I pity you; but remember how many times I have forewarned you, my dear Lydia, when at Bath! I told you again and again that you encouraged that Fairly's visits too much." "Captain Fairly!" repeated the wife, putting aside the salts, with more surprise than sorrow, "what, in the name of wonder, has led you to think the Captain has any concern in this good-for-nothing girl's elopement? I only wish you may find she has done no worse! I no more believe she is gone off with him than with the pope. I know more of Captain Fairly than you do; but it is always your way, Jerry, to

blame me. Do you think me such a fool as not to have seen it, if he had made love to the girl?" "We will not fall out on that question," replied Mr. Serge; "we have troubles sufficient for the hour. All I have to say is *this*, whether it be Captain Fairly, or any other honourable gentleman of his class, who has robbed me of my child, he shall find his work as unprofitable as those who, as we say, perform their work with a hot needle and burnt thread." Jeremiah Serge has not worked early and late to enrich a *rascal*; nor will I countenance a child who has preferred the protection of a *rascal* to that of a tender, honest father." He covered his face and wept aloud. Mrs. Serge was silenced, as well as myself. The dejected father was roused from this sorrow by the entrance of the doctor, who told him that Caroline was much easier, and was disposed to sleep. "Blessed be God!" said he, with an expression of gratitude.

One hope remains. But I will go to d," added he languidly, "for I am angely disordered, and only a trouble my friends." Tears again streamed from s eyes; and no one opposed his retreat. e soon followed his example, and sought at repose which was not to be found at arefield-Hall: I traced her benign foot-ps to Heathcot; and there it was that e spirits of your Rachel Cowley found st. My dear Mary will expect the se-iel of this wonderful business with more an usual curiosity: she shall not be dis-pointed by her affectionate

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLV.

From the same to the same.

Tuesday.

ON Sunday morning we saw nothing of our disconsolate guests. Mr. Serge was closeted with Sir Murdoch; and Mrs. Serge was too much indisposed to rise before the dining hour. Before I give you the conversation the baronet has just been detailing to his wife and myself, I must tell you, that such is my veneration for Mr. Serge, that I cannot be at peace with my conscience till I have made "l'amende honorable," for the flippancy of my pen in describing him to you on my first seeing him. A few more such lessons as I have had will correct my presumption in judging too soon; and

when I am again tempted to laugh at a double chin, or the cut of a man's face, I will remember Sir Murdoch's and Mr. Serge's. The baronet's account of the interview between him and this good creature has so steeled my heart against Miss "Nora," that I wish to leave her on her journey; and for once descend to a vulgarism, and say to you, that if it takes "nine taylors to make a man," I can prove without difficulty, that it would take ninety and nine gentlemen to make such a taylor as Jeremiah Serge. Read, and be incredulous if you can! The conversation began by the baronet's arguments of hope and consolation. "I hope that in time, and with God's help, I shall be comforted," answered Mr. Serge; "but it is not to be expected, that I who am quite an unlettered man, should be so able to meet misfortunes as those who know more. I have endeavoured to do my duty, as well as I was able to perform

it; but I fear my ignorance has brought this calamity on my poor child." "How can this be," asked Sir Murdoch, "have you not lived to render your children happy?" "I thought I had," replied he, mournfully, "and perhaps I accuse myself without just grounds; for I dare say, that be a parent ever so wise and learned, if his heart is wrung as mine is, he will think of some failure or other of his own, which may have led to the evil he deplores: however this may be, I cannot help knowing, that my love of peace, and my ignorance have brought me to sorrow. I never liked this Captain Fairly, who is without doubt the betrayer of my poor child; for we found last night a letter which Nora left for her mother, in my wife's night cap. I hated to see this coxcomb perpetually dangling after my wife, and I told her so; but she cried, and asked me whether she had ever given me cause to be jealous. I could not say she

had, for I believe there never was a more faithful wife; and moreover, I heard her constantly talking to this puppy about a sweetheart whom he expected at Bath. Some few days before we left that place I met with a friend, who knew something of Fairly's father. He told me, that he had left this young man a pretty estate, and some money; but that he had dissipated his fortune, and was then a gambler and a fortune-hunter. I told Lydia this, but she only laughed, and said my friend had mistaken the matter; for fortune was hunting after Fairly, a rich widow being in love with him. However, by this time, I know *Captain Fairly*," added he, with resentment, "but he does not yet know Jeremiah Serge. I will teach him, ignorant as I am, to know, that the goose is not so easy to pluck as the pigeon. No man is more easily deceived than I am, Sir Murdoch. How should it be otherwise? For to this hour, I have never been

able to discover that dishonesty was profitable to a man, even in this world, to say nothing of a better; but when I am tricked by a knave, his business is done with me. I am not twice caught in the same gin. But, Lord help me! I talk as though it was keeping my money that could console me! Alas! what am I the better for riches! One child who has been the prop of my *every* comfort, is sinking into an untimely grave! a second, so trained as to be useless; and the third, who was my pride and pleasure, the property of a villain! I must tell you, Sir Murdoch, all the bitterness of my soul. It has for some time been in my mind, how to make that wealth which Providence has placed in my hands a blessing to my children. I never wished to aggrandize myself with alliances that were above my 'cut.' Yet I thought my Leonora would not disgrace any man. I sometimes talked with my counsellor and best

friend, a *Counsellor Steadman*, on this subject; and I begged of him to look out for me a son in law, who had honour wherewith to meet my honesty, and good sense enough to balance an easy fortune with an uncertain expectation from birth. He sometimes joked at my anxiety; and said my girl would do for a duchess. But knowing I did not wish for a duke, he mentioned a young man, who to me stands higher than the whole peerage. This was your Malcolm, your crown of glory, Sir Murdoch!" The baronet surprised, attempted to speak. "Hear me out," continued he, "before you censure me for looking above me. I knew that you had married my wife's relation, and that with your rank, you had the feelings of a man. Your son had every thing, *but money*; and my child had *with that*, a father whom no man can reproach. So I determined to visit Tarefield, and to take my chance. Hospitality and kindness

have received me; and encouraged by them, I ventured to hint my wishes to Mr. Maclairn. But he did not, or as I now know, he could not listen to me. In our ride home from Durham I was explicit with him; and like what he is, he was also explicit with me; and told me, that his hand and his heart had long been plighted to a young lady in this neighbourhood. I will say nothing of this disappointment, nor the shock it gave my mind, on hearing that that very child had abandoned me for whom I would have travelled barefooted through the world to have provided her with such a protector as Malcolm Maclairn. I have now told you *all*, except what will comfort me. Give me your *hand*, Sir Murdoch, for my *heart*. Let me have a share in your blessing: make me useful to your Malcolm's happiness. This is what I ask. It shall not make me proud; but it will comfort me, and be a blessing to my last hour."

Miss Lydia entered the room, to say that her sister Caroline wished to see her father; and wringing Sir Murdoch's hand he hastily followed Lydia to the sick room.

I will now leave you to your comments, having to write to our 'crown of glory.' *Adieu, pour le present.*

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLVI.

From the same to the same.

AH! flattery!—I see I must go on with my 'pathetic tale.' Therefore I may as well proceed and leave to the flatterers to keep up the connexion. Doctor Douglass was present at the first interview between Mr. Serge and Caroline, and even

regulated it. A tender embrace, and an assurance of her being free from pain was all that was permitted; and the poor father satisfied with this, retreated at the doctor's command. Malcolm persuaded him to ride, and they returned not till the placid features of Mr. Serge could bear our kindness. To-day I have seen Caroline; having heard from Mrs. Allen that she was easy and composed.

I was prepared to find her in bed, but not to see her father stretched by her side on the outside of it, thinking he was with his wife. O! how fervently do I wish that every girl whom folly and heedlessness may tempt into the same road to ruin which Miss Leonora has taken, could have witnessed, as I did, the pangs which rend a parent's bosom for the desertion of a child! Would to heaven I possessed the invisible belt of fiction, I would reserve it for the sole purpose of making such offenders the unseen spectators of the

misery they cause! To judge from the anguish I felt, they would be justly punished! Caroline was supported by pillows in a sitting posture, her countenance still wearing the impression of distress, and the languor occasioned by pain and opiates. Her father was weeping in silence, his face covered. "You will forgive her," said the tender pleader, entirely unmindful of my entrance. "You will, my dear father! Yes, I see you will receive again, this dear, this poor deluded girl!" "I will, I will," said he, sobbing, "I will do any thing, rather than see you grieve, my blessed child! my only hope." "Consider her youth, her inexperience, her beauty," continued the daughter. "Ah! poor creature!" replied the afflicted parent, "I do consider them, and my own incapacity also! These have been her destruction! She is lost, irreparably lost!" "I hope not," answered Caroline; "we are all liable to error, my

dear father: no age can secure us always in the right path, without other aids than our own feeble powers; but we may return to duty, we may recover the ground we have lost, and if her husband love her, and what must be that man who could, in his circumstances, fail in affection, all may yet end well." "It can never end well;" answered he, relapsing into agony, "I say she is *undone*, ruined for life! She has united herself to a thief, a base purloiner of another's treasure; and for what? why for the pelf, which is dross to the loser in comparison with a lost child! This rascal is too base, even for hope. This was no boy's trick with him: neither her beauty nor her innocence allured him. She was the casket in which I kept my money; and had she been the foulest thing in nature, he would have been contented with his prize, so his purpose of wickedness had been accomplished. He is a villain! my Caro-

line; and whether it had been my wife, or my child, that had opened to him my coffers, it would have made no difference to him. But God help me, what am I doing!" added he, checking his vehemence and sorrow. "Grieve no more, my dear Caroline, all shall be as you direct; only be comforted: this poor girl shall be pitied, shall be received again into a father's arms. She shall not find me unrelenting. She shall be happy if I can make her so, and that will cheer you."

I could not remain in the room any longer: I was totally subdued by the language of nature and affection, and again my heart bitterly reproached the child who could abandon such a father: who had not, in his sharpest pangs of sorrow, uttered one menace, and who, hanging over the sick couch of a dutiful daughter, thought more of her consolation than of his own injuries. I recalled

my wish, however; for had Miss Leonora been present, she must have died of compunction; and Caroline has made me charitable. I hope she will live to repent; and repay in some measure her father's goodness.

Mrs. Serge did not appear till the tea hour yesterday. She looked pale, and was for a time silent and sorrowful; but at length she began on the subject of her inquietude. The fugitive was by turns "an ungrateful girl," and "her poor betrayed child;" but what appeared to have made a deep impression on the mother, was the difficulties to which Miss Nora would be exposed in the journey for want of clothes and linen. "She would be such a figure!" and then "for a girl like Nora to be married in such a low life way! She, that might have married in the face of the whole world, even a nobleman, with her fortune!" "That opinion of yours, my dear Lydia," observed

. Serge, somewhat dryly, "has, I , been too often repeated before Mr. rly; and it has had its effect, for it has quered his dislike *to a brown girl.*"— lady coloured crimson deep at this ark.—"There is no accounting for behaviour," answered she; "but if it money he wanted, I know that he ght have had a widow with thirty thou- l pounds in her pocket by *holding* up hand. I must think Nora courted l: his handsome person might, without discredit to her's, or any woman's ice, have pleased her: however, she ght have done worse, Jerry; for after Captain Fairly is a gentleman, and ongs to people who can push him for- rds in the world: I know he has great ations in the East Indies." "Are you : mistaken, Lydia, as to the place in ich this noble captain has friends and nections?" asked Mr. Serge. "Oh " replied she eagerly, "I have heard

him speak many times of a cousin he has at Bombay, who married a nabob, because he would not marry her himself: so in despair she went to the East Indies, and got a husband in a fortnight after she arrived." "I must still think you are out in your geography," replied he, "for I must believe he will never find any friends to acknowledge him, unless at Botany Bay; and upon condition he transport himself thither, my purse shall be open to him." "Lord, Jerry, how cruelly you talk!" answered the weeping wife; "but I know you so well, that I ought not to mind what you say: when you see your poor girl on her bended knees before you, you will forgive and forget." "I have forgiven her, without seeing her on her bended knees," replied he with emotion. "Let her reserve that humility for her heavenly Father: she has offended him in forgetting her duty to me; and this grieves me, Lydia, more than you think." A

big tear rolled down his honest face: then turning to Sir Murdoch and his lady, he expressed his concern at having given them so much trouble and vexation; and mentioning his intention of leaving the Hall on Tuesday morning, provided Doctor Douglas did not oppose the measure. I omit the reply made to this declaration. "I have not the smallest doubt," said he, struggling to suppress his tears. "You are good and kind-hearted people, and as such, speak as you mean; but my child wishes to be at Putney, in order to receive and comfort her sister." The doctor observed, that Miss Serge's anxiety to return home would be more hurtful to her than the journey. It was, therefore, settled, that our guests should depart at the time they proposed, which is, however, postponed till Thursday.

My reverence for Mr. Serge has, my dear Lucy, risen within these few last days to veneration. I have even neglected my

bounden duty to my dear Sir Murdoch, in order to watch Mr. Serge in his solitary walks in the avenue. We understand each other. He talks to me of his idol Caroline: asks me a thousand questions about Mr. Hardcastle; and wonders that he never heard Counsellor Steadman mention so extraordinary a man! Then he stops, looks in my face, and says with a sigh, "What would I give to see my Caroline as healthy as you, Miss Cowley? But she is as good as you are. If you knew the heart of my child you would love her, and pity me." The tone with which he calls Caroline "his child" is so peculiarly tender, and expressive of his affection for her, that a stranger to him and his family would conclude that his hopes hung on the life of an *only child*: but in his conduct to them all he appears to be governed by one leading principle of affection and indulgence; and the preference he gives to Caroline is the result of that confidence and esteem which

his own unsophisticated understanding has discovered to be due to her worth and talents. He calls her sometimes his *Prop*, at another his *Pride*, and his *Boast*; and this morning with a flood of tears, he told me that I could never know what were the advantages he had reaped from having had a child like his Caroline; and he concluded that my father had been *well educated*, by the wisdom he had shown in regard to me: whereas," added he, "my child has been eyes to the blind, as I may say, in her parents' house."

Farewell! I am going to take an airing with Mr. Serge. Your's, ever,

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLVII.

From the same to the same.

YOU are sorry, you say, that the Serges have left Tarefield so soon; and that also my sweet Mary regrets the loss of the best part of my romance, the recovery of Miss Serge's health, and the happiness of the whole family, by the forgiveness of the imprudent Leonora. But I cannot gratify Mary. Heaven in its own time will render to Caroline Serge the meed of suffering virtue. Miss Leonora must first forgive herself, before her father's pardon can be a blessing to her; and if she is ever entitled to his forgiveness, it must be attained by the road of self-reproach and repentance. I can only wish her well through the rug-

ged path, and pray that she may not stumble nor faint in it.

You may think me relapsing into hardness of heart. I cannot help it. My affection for the worthy will have its ascendancy. But I send you the substance of a conversation between me and Miss Serge, which will at once account for my uncharitable sentiments in mentioning the fugitive bride.

Willing to be of some use in the general bustle preparatory to our friends' departure, and to which was added the more than common indisposition of Miss Flint, who has not yet recovered from the consequences of Miss Nora's unceremonious departure, I offered my services to Caroline, who, as being the least exacting, I thought in danger of being the most forgotten. She was quietly and meekly sitting in her easy chair, and alone. She received me with satisfaction. I began to net. The conversation soon turned on

her sister, her hopes of meeting her, and effecting an entire reconciliation, and forgiveness of her marriage. "I have only one fear to harass my spirits," added she, "and my efforts to check my impatience augments this fear. I know that my life depends on my being placid; and I may render myself useless to Leonora from my anxiety to serve her." I praised her goodness. "It is my duty only that I can perform," answered she; "and even in my attempts and hopes, as these relate to my sister, I am governed by a still superior principle of action. I well know what my dear father's sorrow will be, when I am removed. He will need comfort, and Leonora has only to use her understanding, and to employ her cares assiduously to be the consoler he will want in the first access of his sorrow: his God and his own piety will then be his consolation, I trust." "And I most fervently hope," replied I, "that your youth and

your patience will effect your restoration to health. You will live, I trust, to be a comfort and a blessing to your good father, and all your family. You may reasonably hope to enjoy many years of comfortable existence in this world, before you are recalled to the heaven for which you are so richly prepared." My warm and earnest manner surprised her, I believe; for her eyes swam in tears, and she blushed. "I am indebted to a good and pious aunt, who brought me up," replied she, "for the patience and the peace of mind I have enjoyed under a course of trial, which my youth little expected three years since. How often have I blessed this relation for her lessons, and for an example that has supported me, and which will I hope, still support me to the end."—She checked herself, and then proceeded.

"This aunt," continued she, "might with propriety be called my father's best

friend. Left an orphan, and without the means of life, she received him when a mere boy; and supported him as her child. On the death of her husband, who left her rich, she placed my father at the head of the business, and although not more than forty, rejected for his sake several overtures of marriage. She superintended his family; and in the prosperity and tranquillity of my father's life, he was in danger of forgetting, that, 'man was not born to be alone.' He was advancing to the season of old batchelorship, when he married my mother; who is full twenty years younger than himself: she was very pretty, and good-natured: my aunt, as she has told me, feared, on hearing of the marriage, that my father's good genius had forsaken him; but although a mere household drudge, she had understanding to discover that a man of my father's age, with an affluent fortune, and a thriving indus-

try, was not likely when in love to be '*controuled by advice.*' The good humour and docility of the young wife soon gained her good will, and her frank confession, that she knew nothing of family management, and was unequal to the direction of one so numerous as my father's, induced Mrs. Massey, my aunt, to give up her plan of living in the country. She retained her post of usefulness; and my mother, delighted by the amusements within her reach, and contented with the idleness of an indulged child, saw with gratitude, rather than jealousy, her authority delegated into the hands of one who never interfered with her pleasures or wishes."

"I was the first born child, and the first serious vexation, that my aunt experienced from my father's marriage. She had hoped to see my mother a nurse; but she was disappointed. I was sent into the *country*; even so far as *Bow*; and two

years nursing there returned me to St. Martin's Lane, half stupified with Godfrey's cordial, and ricketty in every joint. Unfortunately my mother, attributing my bad health and feebleness to natural weakness, rather than to improper management, pursued the same line of conduct with my sister Lydia, who was born a more vigorous child; but willing to make some concessions, she placed her at *East Ham*, a little further distant from London, and on Epping Forest. Country nursing would, it is probable, have kept its ground in my mother's good opinion, from the proof Lydia gave of its utility, had it not been for an accident, which happened to my mother, in returning home from visiting her. She was in company with my father, and they were both robbed by a highwayman, who, not contented with their watches and purses, was brutal, and so terrified my mother, that she was in danger of her life, and the

consequence was, her losing a male child by a premature birth. Leonora, at my father's request, was reared by a wet nurse at home; and my mother found the nursery in the attic no interruption to her amusements. About this period, fortune augmented my father's abundance: he gained the twenty thousand pound prize in the state lottery; but this accession of wealth made little alteration in our modes of life. My mother preferred a *job* coach to any other, and observed that she had a country house in every good inn within an airing from town. Her early habits of life, and her remoteness from the fashionable world and its follies, had happily secured to her a relish for enjoyments, which, though more common, were less ruinous. She was contented in her own sphere of action, and uncontrouled by my father, who viewing every proof of her kindness and liberality to others through the medium of his own

active benevolence, was indulgent to the defects of my mother's mode of being useful. But a death, or a birth, in any family within her knowledge or reach, was the signal for her to desert her own. A stranger might at times have mistaken, in the night, our house for the abode of an accoucheur. Alert and vigilant, my mother obeyed the first summons; and with exultation would detail to my aunt the steps she had trodden, or the road she had passed, in the cares of providing for a funeral, or getting a wet nurse for an infant. I really believe she has answered at the font for more children than she can recollect by their baptismal or sirnames, and has gone more miles to trace the qualifications of a cook-maid for her friends, than a judge goes on his circuit. In a word, all was *pleasure* to my dear mother, that was bustle, hurry, and an exertion of her constant flow of animal spirits. I fear I have spoken too unguardedly of my mother's lit-

e foibles," continued Caroline with a mo-
est blush, "for believe me, she has many
xcellent traits in her character; and even in
er mistakes, the goodness of her heart
revails. But I have been led into this
onfidence in you, Miss Cowley, from the
peculiar state of my thoughts as these relate
to my sister's unfortunate marriage. I
once or twice saw the man to whom she has
so unguardedly committed her own happi-
ness, and the tranquillity of her father. I
was not pleased with him; for I perceived
that he was a designing man, and had al-
ready secured by his attentions my mother's
good opinion. I now dread his influence
as her *son*. The genuine virtue and sim-
plicity of my father's mind, with his
indulgence and liberality of temper, will
be feeble barriers to oppose to this Cap-
tain Fairly's seductions, should it be his
pleasure to lead my mother into the
mares of dissipation and fashionable life.
I have observed, even from the hour the

Miss Gudgeons first accompanied Leonora to Putney, the facility with which my mother adopted new ideas of her importance, and new notions in regard to our modes of living. At the last visit which these girls paid us, she offended one of my father's most ancient and respectable friends, by omitting to invite his wife and daughter, because he was a sadler. Her short residence and acquaintance with Lady Gudgeon, at Bath, though fortunately terminated, was not without its bad effects, and I have been concerned to see, from time to time, since our return to Putney, my dear mother assuming with her neighbours more of Lady Gudgeon's manners than they liked; but her cheerfulness and frankness of temper soon conciliated them, and banished from her mind her 'genteel society.' My father will be made wretched," continued the amiable creature, "should this Fairly gain an ascendancy in

the family; for I am convinced he is a worthless man, and void of every principle."—She was agitated, and I saw that she with pain suppressed something. "My mother has been much gratified," pursued she, by my employing my good offices in Leonora's behalf: that is some comfort to me, and it is wrong to anticipate evil. Leonora is now his wife, and I will only think of her future security, not of her present condition." She again paused.——"I was reading this morning," continued she, "the story of the Homespun family, from 'the Mirror:' you will not be surprised, my dear Miss Cowley, after my little detail, that I could not help being struck with the analogy I found between this family and our own. All our mistakes have, as it appears to me, originated from the want of education; I mean of that education requisite to the safety of the individual: one suitable to their rank and place in life. Had

my dear father not been raised to such an unexpected accession of wealth, all had been well. My mother's activity would have been confined to the duties of his station, and the care of her children. Our present dangers would not have found a place in the abode of competence and contentment: nor would my father's unambitious mind and simplicity of character, have been an object of censure or of ridicule." I will spare my pen the task of recording my reply to this appeal. You know my wisdom, and if, like Solomon's "it be vanity and vexation of spirit," it served one good purpose, for it led us into a less serious conversation on the subject of female education and female attainments. So leaving to your sagacity to fish out as you can my profound observations, I will send you Caroline Serge's opinions upon these important topics.

"I am no advocate for ignorance," said she, in reply to an observation I had made; "but I am persuaded that the

same mode of education cannot be adopted with safety or utility to every girl; and granting all the advantages which you have enumerated as resulting from a cultivated understanding and refined taste, I must still be of opinion, that we should be instructed with a view to the sphere in which we are destined to move, and to the duties to which we are more peculiarly appointed. It is not my father's wealth or connections that could render Leonora happy under the parental roof. Too much refinement for our plain manners has made her discontented and ungrateful; and she will, I fear, be unhappy for life, and a constant source of misery to her parents. Lydia on the other hand,"—She cast down her eyes, and with some hesitation, added,—"may be *their disgrace*; for she has been *too much* neglected. I have many times blessed God, Miss Cowley, for the instructions of my youth: they were such as suited

my situation; and they have made me useful to my family, besides having enforced that patience and resignation to the will of God, which my trials have needed, and which the most brilliant attainments might have failed in producing. I have, you see, not considered in this view, the education of a young person, who, like yourself, has been judiciously and well instructed; but that tuition which, as often appears to me to neglect, not only what is useful, but what principally constitutes the only object worth attending to; for unless moral discipline goes along with the enlargement of the understanding, and the cultivation of taste, these are nothing; and indeed are often, *more pernicious than ignorance.* It is true," added she, smiling, "that my aunt Massey's lessons were not calculated to render me either polite or accomplished; but there is nothing in household wisdom to pervert the mind, or mislead the imagination. I

should have liked to read more than I did; but she was of opinion that I read enough for a girl; and with some vanity, boasted of my arithmetic, when Leonora's talents were mentioned. My bad health, and the confinement to which it has subjected me, have made me fond of reading, and it is with satisfaction that I have seen my father also find amusement from books. He would, I am persuaded, to please me," added she, smiling, "have undertaken to learn Hebrew; but I was apprehensive with his choice of books, and we have confined ourselves to those we understand. Be not surprised, my dear Miss Cowley, that I thus plead in favour of unadorned goodness, and plain sense," continued she. "My father has shown me, that virtue needs not the polish of the world, nor the acquirements of the schools, to make its way to the esteem and reverence of those within the reach of its attractive powers. You have wit-

nessed my father's goodness to his children; and believe me, when I tell you, that his whole life and conversation has been exactly similar to the 'Israelites, in whom there was no guile.' God will comfort and support him when I am removed! But I know, too well for my tranquillity, what he will suffer when I *am* removed, and that thought prevents my being what I ought to be." She checked herself, and wiping away a falling tear, proceeded: "I have not finished my little history," said she smiling; "but I shall tire you; yet it is necessary in order for me to bring forward my conclusions, and to leave with you my confirmed opinion on the subject we have been engaged in." You will supply my answer, Lucy.

"My aunt, in the mean time," continued Caroline, "trained me up to be, as she said, her 'right hand,' and she frequently adverted to her age and infirmities as an-

other and powerful motive, which led her to keep me so much in the domestic way. I was reminded continually of my father's comforts: of the disorder and confusion of such a family as ours, if left without a manager; and hints were from time to time dropped, that my mother had no turn for family affairs, though a good parent, and a good woman. Lydia's indulgences grieved her; but she had too much on her hands, for hourly contests; and my mother was satisfied, that in her day-school she learned enough for her years, and that the kitchen was no worse for her play hours, than any other place. Nora was the idol we all worshipped: she was lively and attractive beyond even the attractive age of infancy: she was the pride of our hearts, and the delight of my father's eyes! Even Mrs. Massey was unable to resist her fascinating vivacity and sweetness of temper; and young as I was, I have remarked the pleasure which

beamed from her own comely face, on being told, that the little Leonora was "her very image." I had just attained my fifteenth year, when we lost this good aunt. A will made in my father's favour whilst he was yet a bachelor, put him in possession of her whole property, which I have been told amounted to near thirty thousand pounds.

I have, however, reason for believing that Mrs. Massey had frequently thought of altering the form of her donation; and securing to us her fortune after my father's death: for I remember well hearing her many times say, that my mother was not fit for business, and might be left a young widow. From these remarks she would hastily turn, and descant on the advantages of habits of economy and order; recounting to me the management by which she had seconded her husband's industry, and with what comfort they lived to see their little beginnings of one thousand pounds accumu-

, and their business daily flourishing. However, child," she would add, "your her is in a much more extensive line of siness than his uncle ever was; and as his ily is a very different one from mine, behoves him to live at more expence; t that is no reason for being extrava- nt or careless; and you must never relax your duty." It may be necessary to l you that my father's household was ger than is common with people in his s. He carried on an extensive com- rce in the wholesale line of his trade, l manufactured his own cloth, in a se of business at or near Wakefield in rkshire. In consequence of these en- gements, we had in the family several ng men as assistants and clerks, who ed at our table, and it was a liberal e. My father had purchased the house Putney before the melancholy event of y aunt's death, meaning to make it the idence of my mother and his daughters:

and in his first depression of spirits for a loss which no accession of fortune could lessen, he declared his intention of quitting business, and living there himself. For a time, however, he found in me, *another Mrs. Massey*, to use his own partial words of praise; for assisted by an old domestic of my aunt's training, I superintended the house in St. Martin's lane, and my dear father still found it his abode of comfort. Leonora was at this period at her school, Lydia, but I need not recapitulate to you her defects! I mentioned to my father my fears for her; and without any opposition on my mother's part, she was permitted to bear me company in St. Martin's-lane. But I was too young for a duenna, and too feeble in health, for endless contests; and warned by the good od woman who directed in the kitchen, that Lydia was too often wanting to have pens mended in the counting house, I gave up a charge for which I was so

little qualified. It is nearly three years since my complaint became formidable. Mr. Tomkins, my father's associate in business, married; and I was no longer necessary in St. Martin's-lane. Country air was prescribed, and my father, in order to watch over my health, gave up his commercial concerns and his enjoyments. In every interval of ease, I have endeavoured to win Lydia to some useful application of her hours; but neither my appeals to her reason, nor even her vanity, have been attended with success. Nora's contempt of her has not been unobserved, however; and she has returned this, by fostering in her heart a resentment, which no time will soften; whilst she manifests to me a good will and affection unbounded, but as they are checked by her habits of idleness, and predilection for company, in which she finds herself without restraint. Thus, my dear Miss Cowley, have I vainly endeavoured to be useful to

my sisters. Alas! I have found that my arguments are no more understood by beauty, accomplishments, and a *finished* education, than by vulgar ignorance, and rudeness. Too much refinement on the one hand, and too little on the other, having defeated my purpose of seeing them what I desire; the children, and the happy children, of a parent beyond all praise for purity of heart, and the humble and genuine graces of Christianity. And let me ask you," added she, with animation, "whether in a world like this, and for the accommodation of creatures like ourselves, it is not wisdom, to prefer the lowly but snug cottage, to the sumptuous palace, under every consideration which our reason may suggest in the choice. If the gorgeous structure wants a solid *foundation*, and the cottage a *fence*, I should still seek my safety under the low mud walls, believing that the higher the edifice is, the greater is the hazard."

Mrs. Serge's entrance prevented my reply; and finding she had some directions to give to the servant who followed her, relative to Caroline's clothes, I withdrew. What a loss will this amiable girl be to her family! It is to be lamented, that heaven recalls her from a world, in which she would be an example that good sense is worth something, and more to be coveted than "gold, even than pure gold."

I did not take leave of her without tears. She has promised to write to me if her health permit her.

I forgot to inform you of our parting scene below stairs, and shall preface it, by telling you, that Malcolm now ranks with me amongst my *worthies*. Never talk to me of your Scipio's, your Titus's, and such "heathenish folks," as Deborah used to call them in her indignation, on hearing that they worshipped images, whilst I can produce a mere village swain

true to love; and who expects the object of his flame every hour to return, and recompense him for a month of sighs and absence, yet calmly and heroically prepares to devote those hours of joy to the comfort and assistance of the dejected Mr. Serge on the road. The poor man, with a heavy heart, mentioned, that they should find the way much longer to Putney on returning, than when in search of their kind friends. "You have shewn us," added he, "that we have relations, and we shall go home with heavy hearts, counting the miles which separate us; but I shall never forget Tarefield, nor like Putney again" "We part as relations and friends," answered the worthy baronet, taking his hand, "as such we have participated in your recent vexation, my good Mr. Serge; and we are only to be contented by your promising us another, and a longer visit next summer. Tell Leonora I shall not forgive her, 'till

I see her in her late nest; and her husband shall pay us for her late desertion, by remaining with us, till we are weary of him and her."

"Thank ye! thank ye!" was uttered by a voice which could not proceed, and which touched me to the very soul. "They wait for us," observed Mrs. Serge, "we must part." Malcolm took Caroline's hand, and asked her whether she had courage to try the phaeton for a mile or two: "when you are weary," added he, smiling, "I will be contented with your father." The poor man's features swelled with his emotions. "The Lord be merciful to me!" cried he, "but I verily believe you mean to take care of *us* on the road." "Undoubtedly," answered Malcolm, "and in return I shall expect you will take care of me at Putney for a week." "God will bless you, young man," answered Mr. Serge, in an under-toned voice, and with great solem-

nity. "This is not the first journey of humanity that will be placed to your account, nor will it be forgotten, that no duty, beyond that of *good will*, has led you to the performance of this second act of charity." Malcolm coloured, and hastened his steps. I am convinced that Mr. Serge alluded to his following his father to town, when for me, he left his home in a condition of weakness, which the son's tenderness saw and compassionated: I have no doubt of Counsellor Steadman's having mentioned to Mr. Serge, the filial conduct of a young man who so completely won his good opinion, whilst he was with us.

The baronet, thinking it a good opportunity of paying off something from the score of "favours received," persuaded me to take an airing with him after our guests were departed. We drove to Bishop's-Auckland; for since Miss Leonora has made us acquainted with Mr. Type's

ary, Sir Murdoch reads novels with
avidity and interest of a miss in her
s. Something in Miss Type's man-
excited my curiosity. On inquiring
ther all the volumes had been returned
ch had been placed to Miss Serge's
unt, she replied with a smile in the
gative, adding, that she hoped the
ng lady would in her turn find the
ge she had sent with the books as ex-
. An explanation followed, and I
rd that Miss Nora had judged it expe-
nt to use my name instead of her own,
her contrivance to secure for her jour-
a change of linen, and the girl with
ne confusion of face told me that, she
ught the gentleman at the Mitre had
n my lover from what he had said.
o now leaving my dear Mary to con-
r at her leisure of the marvellous and
ifold talents necessary to effect the
ncipation of a young lady of sixteen
seventeen, from the galling yoke of

parental prudence, and the insipid security of a parental roof, I shall conclude this letter; sincerely congratulating her on the little acquaintance she has with cunning, ingratitude, and a courage which sets at defiance, even a life of misery, for the gratification of having for an hour, "her *own mind*." Not doubting, but Mrs. Fairly will soon conclude the lesson, by publishing the succeeding volume, under the title of "The too late Repentance." Heaven preserve you, my dear girls, and believe me sincerely your's,

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLVIII.

rom Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

NEVER shall, my dear Lucy, attempt to conceal from you the state of my pirits. You judged right. I was dected by the contents of Horace's last etter. His account of Lord William's recent danger, by the sudden bursting of an abscess on the lungs, and the depression of mind with which Horace wrote the account of this dreadful alarm, could not be balanced by the more flattering hopes with which he finishes his letter. He ays, that the patient is relieved, and that he physicians are of opinion, that his life nay be prolonged by this effort of nature.

But thoughts will intrude Lucy. Horace continually over the couch of a per-

son in Lord William's situation, is not an image which cheers my serious hours. I believe that few medical men now refuse their concurrence in the opinion that consumptions are contagious, particularly to those who are young. It has been, and must be, a matter of surprise and regret to me, that Mr. Hardcastle has not participated with me in these apprehensions; but on *no* consideration would I wish him to be alarmed at this moment; being certain, that *none* would induce Horace to leave his friend at this juncture. I will therefore imitate him in his virtue, and I beg you will do the same, and leave the event to that Providence which has hitherto preserved his health, and witnessed his perseverance and fortitude in the exercise of his duty. I frankly confess that I have not been altogether your *Beatrix*, since the receipt of Horace's last letters; and the absence of the Serge, with that of my friends from the Abbey,

has left me more leisure, than has been useful to me; but knowing my remedy, I have applied to it; and I am at present Sir Murdoch's pupil for painting in oils: he encourages me: and I am employed; the Heartleys are, however, returned, and my spirits are returned with them. Tell Mary she is to give full credit to Alice's news of her uncle's triumphs at Hartley-pool. He is become a beau, and a young man, and could we manage to keep him easy in regard to Miss Flint, we should all be contented with him; but he is too anxious for her to keep long his good looks, which, to say the truth, are beyond any I expected to see, for he is absolutely handsome with his *ruddy* face. Malcolm returned last night; and you, as we did, will expect Putney news. He saw poor Leonora only once: she was indisposed when he left his good friends, but Captain Fairly had several times shown himself to the *modest rustic*. Mal-

colm, was by no means pleased with him. He says that, except a showy person, which may be called a handsome one, he could not discover a single attraction in this man, which was likely to captivate a girl of Leonora's description; for he is cold, formal, and affected in his manner; and announces the little he has to say with a pomposity which diverted him, and which it was astonishing could have escaped Leonora's ridicule. But he thinks the captain is acting a new part with these simple people, and he asserts, that, Fairly has worn the buskin, or at least, has studied for the stage. Malcolm very discreetly took care to be absent the first day the offending daughter was received at Putney; but judging that the interview would leave Mr. Serge dispirited, he returned in the evening before the new married couple had left the house, which they did, it appears, in order to their finally quitting the Adelphi-Hotel, for

Putney, where Malcolm left them. "On entering the drawing room," continued our favourite, "I found only Mrs. Serge with the captain, and a sort of awkward introduction followed. The captain appeared impatient for his lady's departure, who with her father was with Miss Serge; and expressed in high-flown terms, his apprehensions lest his dear Leonora should be completely ill, with a day of such fatigue and trial, for her weak and delicate spirits. I thought him an awkward hypocrite. "Oh! do not fear!" answered the mother, with more tartness of manner than I had yet perceived; "Nora will bear this day's fatigue as well as she did her journey to Scotland; though, to say the truth," added she, "I do not think her *complexion* improved, by travelling post for so many miles; and unless rest restores her colour, you will be in danger of renewing your preference of Lydia's fair skin and hair." She laughed, but it was

obvious that more was meant by this observation, than I could understand; the captain, however, probably did; for with a smile he reminded her, that all stratagems were lawful in love and war. "That is more than I will allow," answered she, colouring; "and I must needs think, that a battle or a wife, so gained, *show* more *cunning* than *courage*; however, let this pass, you have succeeded; and I trust you will be happy with your 'Nut-brown Maid.' The captain spouted some poetry in reply; and Mrs. Serge with a look of softened resentment remarked, that he well understood the way to a woman's heart, and she had no doubt of his knowing how to keep Nora's. The door opened, and Mr. Serge entered the room with his weeping daughter. Malcolm hastily retreating into the inner apartment, heard her sobs and adieus. The next day, she took possession of her deserted nest; but was too ill to join the family at

their repasts. Malcolm saw her, however, for five minutes, when he took his leave of Caroline, who has wonderfully supported herself during this scene of vexation. He was commissioned to say all that was cordial and kind on the part of the harrassed Serges; but they could not write.

We are, my dear Lucy, becoming *lambs* at Tarefield Hall: Miss Flint could not settle for the night, without sending Warner with her compliments to Mr. Maclairn, with inquiries after his health and Mr. Serge's family. Malcolm, whose heart is that of a lamb, also coloured at this unexpected civility; and he very handsomely sent his acknowledgments, and Miss Serge's particular respects to her fellow sufferer. So true is it, that "soft words turn away wrath," that I verily believe Malcolm listened with pity to his mother's account of Lucretia's sinking health and spirit. I, wisely resolving to

profit from this temper of charity, have been in the invalid's room for more than an hour this morning. Lady Maclairn is relieved by these measures, and poor Miss Flint often appears amused by our chat. But it is incredible with what patience she bears the pain in her knee, which is excruciating at times, and prevents her sleeping for nights together. Who could have believed that pain and sickness would have rendered Miss Flint patient and submissive! As it is a bitter remedy, Lucy, so it ought to be an efficacious one; and it is our own fault when it proves useless. Believe me cheerful and well, for indeed I am both; and I am going to the Abbey this evening to exult with *the happy, and* to be happy.

Your's, affectionately,

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER XLIX.

From the same to the same.

OUR confession, my dear Lucy, with
own, shall be placed aside; but within
reach, in order to be useful when we
again so absurd as to yield to the de-
ndency of anticipated evils. Your
ther is well; Lord William gaining
ind; and we will be cheerful and con-
ted. Mr. Hardcastle's letter agrees
h mine; and whether the physician's
es be or be not well grounded, we will
thankful, that the interesting patient is
ieved from a portion of his suffering,
l Horace from the immediate pangs of
ing him expire.

I am just returned from inspecting the
ntents of two large boxes sent from

town, by order of Jeremiah Serge, Esq. "To Sir Murdoch Maclairn, at Tarefield-Hall." A short note from his lady specified, that having recollected that the tea equipage which she had seen at Tarefield was the property of Miss Flint, she had presumed to hope, that the one which gratitude had signed with the initials J. L. S. would find favour at the Hall, and be received by Sir Murdoch and Lady Maclairn, as a mark of their love, and as a tribute of their sense of the kindnesses they had met with under their hospitable roof." Caroline's style was obvious in this note.

All that fashion and wealth have suggested as an appendage to the tea table, successively appeared in plain but highly-finished plate. The other box contained a superb set of Derbyshire china; each piece so accurately painted with views taken from the romantic scenery with which that part of England abounds, that I conceive it to be an outrage on taste to

se them, as they would embellish the first abinet in Europe. Sir Murdoch, as I fan-ied, looked more oppressed than delighted y this munificent proof of Mr. Serge's gra-itude; for surveying the costly urn, &c. &c. e gravely observed, that *wealth* had made Mr. Serge *profuse*, if such were the common eturns he made for common civilities. A mall parcel directed to Malcolm diverted is attention from pursuing this train of hought; for with an elegant gold watch, nd a chain loaded with trinkets, were let-ers from the family; and the one address-d to the baronet, which was somewhat in he *onion* form, being produced, he retired with his share of the present.

In my next you shall see our joint la-bours; for we have conquered our reluc-tance to receiving the offerings of pure good will and kindness; or rather these are forgotten in our admiration of a being whose good will is more gratifying. Mrs. Allen has already begun her share of

copying the letters from Putney. So peace be with you! I am going *to be good*, and supply her absence in Miss Flint's room.

RACHEL COWLEY.

In continuation.—We have agreed, that, as Mrs. Serge wrote so much in a *hurry;* and that as we are ourselves so much in a hurry to gratify your curiosity, it may suffice to give the substance of Mrs. Serges's letter to her "dear cozin." She refers her for particulars to "Jerry;" and is contented with rejoicing, that matters are amicably settled: not in the least doubting but that Captain Fairly will soon gain her husband's good opinion, he being a "wery sensible man." She is so engaged in shopping for Nora, that she has hardly an hour she can call her own; and what with a change of servants, and one thing and another, she finds herself quite fatigued; but Mrs. Fairly was not

well enough to order her new dresses; and it was necessary they should be in hand, against her seeing the captain's friends. This, I think, is all that is worthy of notice in Mrs. Serge's epistle, except her kind compliment to me, in which she assures me that she shall insist on having the pleasure of seeing me her guest, as soon as Mrs. Fairly is settled in London; and that with the young bride and Miss Cowley, she promises herself much pleasure in the winter months; for Nora might be said to be a stranger in town, as well as Miss Cowley.

Caroline's short note to Malcolm is written in a style of affection. She calls him her "*Dear brother,*" and requests him to present to Miss Heartley the watch, &c. she had sent. "Her acceptance of this trifle," adds she, "will convince me, that she admits my claims to your friendship, and that she will pardon me for using a title, which Malcolm Maclairn

sanctions; and which she frankly confessed, it gave her pleasure to use, although attended with regrets too selfish for Miss Heartley's indulgence." She concludes with wishing that she had seen Alice; but adds, "your affection for her at once bespeaks her worth; and she will deserve the happiness which awaits her."

The following letter you have entire. Not a syllable of Mr. Serge's shall be lost.

LETTER L.

Putney, October the 11th, 1790.

"My good Sir Murdoch and Cousin,"

"I SEND you with my kind love, a small tribute of my gratitude, the sentiments of which I shall carry with me to

ny grave, for all your hospitable cares of us, when with you; and above all, for our pity and compassion towards my dear sick child. I have only to say on this subject, that not you, nor any under your roof, will ever live to repent of your kindness to Caroline; for there never was a young creature who better deserved the consideration of good people.

"You must take the will for the deed, if we have blundered in regard to the things we have sent to your worthy lady; but Caroline thought her mother had judged very properly; and was certain you would be pleased with any marks of our affection, seeing we are not those, who do one thing and mean another; and if the fashion of these things should not happen to suit your fancy, the fault is not my wife's, for she took a great deal of pains to get what was tasty, that I must say; and Lydia would go to the world's end to serve a friend.

"I have had a meeting with my poor Nora, and my fine spark of a son in law: it was just as my dear Caroline said it would be. I never felt so uncomfortable in my life as when I saw my poor girl attempting to speak to me, and unable to utter a word! I was like a dying man: I could hardly breathe. What then, must she have suffered, Sir Murdoch? Seeing, she had left *me* for another's protection, not I *her*: but women have a great advantage over us, for tears relieve them; and although I have shed many, and found them serviceable, yet on this occasion I could only compare my eyes to dry springs. Well, I sent her to Caroline's room, where I knew she would find comfort. So then my gentleman began to talk of his *love* and his *honour*; but I stopped him short, and in so many words told him, that I would not give him a cast off brass button for his whole stock of either of these articles. 'A little ho-

nesty, *Mr.* or Captain Fairly,' added I, 'would have pleased me better. I am a plain, and it may be, in your eyes, an ignorant man. I see no honour in running away with another man's child, any more than with his purse; nor any love in cheating a silly young girl of her principles of duty to her parents, and reducing her to a life of sorrow and repentance. However, it is no longer time to think of this: what is done, is done: she must stand the hazard. The business now is, to make the *best of what is done*. You knowing my calling and station in the world, and need not fear on that score: Pray tell me, what is *your* calling, Sir: What are your prospects and pursuits? I am told, you have sold your commission, and spent your father's estate.' He looked confounded, said it was unfortunately true, the indiscretions of youth had dissipated his means, and bad health had obliged him to quit his regiment. But he trusted,

that at thirty years of age, he had gained experience, and that he might yet live to obliterate from the world's recollection, the follies of a youth of sixteen, committed to his own direction, with a sword by his side, and a feather in his hat. 'Well,' said I, 'this is what *I call* honest. Now tell me, what is become of your estate: your father left it to you, and I should like to see it reclaimed, and in your hands, to leave it to a son, who might be made prudent by your experience: I am not a hard-hearted man, Mr. Fairly, nor are you the first I have assisted, whose fortune was out at the elbows. This estate I will redeem, provided you are content to reside on it, and on condition, that I know your debts to their full extent.' He assured me that these were trifling; but confessed that the estate was mortgaged for nearly its full value. 'No matter,' returned I, 'I will not recede from my purpose: I did not like your trade at

h: try whether farming will not em-
y you more profitably: be kind to
ir wife, and I will pass over all offences."
He thanked me, and again talked of
honour, saying he was ready to give
any securities I wished, for my daugh-
's future provision. 'I want none from
,' answered I, 'beyond that love and
t you have given her before your
ker; for the rest, *I shall be her secu-*
. My daughter, by her imprudent
duct, has made over *to me* the care of
viding for her children; and they shall
be beggars, if I can prevent it. A
e tale indeed would it be, to put on
emiah Serge's grave-stone, that he
sted the property of hard-earned indus-
, and the future means of supporting
family, to a girl of sixteen, who threw
self away!' My gentleman was angry;
t I again stopped him short: 'You will
well to remember,' said I, 'that I am
man who have made my way in the

world by a very simple rule in arithmetic, two and a nought will never make three in my reckoning: a laced jacket will never supply the want of a good lining. Do you take heed to merit my kindness, and leave to me the provision for my daughter. Your good conduct will make me generous. Till I know more of you I will be just, and every three months Nora shall have one hundred pounds to pay your baker's and butcher's bills. But I warn you, not to trust to me for being an easy fool to manage. I repeat it, Mr. Fairly, I am not an ill-natured man, although a very firm one on some occasions. Seeing but a very little way before me, I see, perhaps, pretty clearly, what it is my duty *to do*; and when I see *that*, nothing can turn me from forming it. If you want a little ready cash, say so, I will supply you, as I would any man in need; and will forget, if I can, that my money probably pays for the post horses that carried my child to Gretna

ben.' So I put into his hand an hun-
d pound bank-note, which he took
h a lower bow than I could have made
r ten times the sum, to a man I had
ound. Our conference finished, by my
ing that I thought my house a more
itable residence for his young wife, than
her a public one, or private lodgings,
his own was ready; and offering my
nd, I told him that it depended on him-
f to find a father under its roof. I
ought he looked ashamed, and his hand
embled so, that brought to my mind
ore forcibly my blessed Master's com-
ands, 'If thy brother sinneth against
ee, seven, and seventy-times-seven,
ou shalt forgive him.' And, after all,
ir Murdoch, where is the comfort of an
nrelenting temper? This man may turn
ut a good husband, and repay my for-
iveness of him an hundred-fold by his
indness to my poor heedless girl. He
ay, if he will, make a worthy man, and

a good father, and be a comfort to me: at any rate, I have done my duty, and pleased my blessed Caroline. She told me this very morning, that she was certain I had secured the approbation of my own conscience, and the favour of God, by my goodness to Leonora; and that my conduct had given her a joy which this world had not the power to lessen. Oh! if you could but see, and hear her! But she is going where only she can be known and glorified!

"I shall not finish this letter to-day, as I must first see Counsellor Steadman, who will write to you by this conveyance. You will have from him the business now before us, and I shall expect your answer to be speedy."

October the 12th.

"My friend the Counsellor assures me, that he has so explained my views and wishes, that you will not be offended, nor

be able to misunderstand my intentions. I shall therefore altogether waive the subject, and finish my paper with my own cares and troubles; for it is the only relief I find to disburden my mind of the multitude of thoughts that oppress me, and I cannot help believing that my gracious and merciful God, knowing that I should want a friend to support me in my trials, has opened to me a road in which my ignorance and weakness would meet with help and kindness.

"Poor Nora has not got up her spirits yet; she looks sadly, and seems more pained than encouraged by my pity for her. Poor fool! She is like a young bird, Sir Murdoch, who, in too much haste to try its wing, has just reached a limed twig in sight of the nest it so heedlessly quitted; and she now, poor girl, like it, sorrows, and thinks of the comfort she had with us. My wife says that the Captain is very fond of her, and if all be gold that glitters, I

quietudes, which still prevent my being *what I ought to be.*

"It will not surprise you to hear, that in my hours of solitude, my thoughts recur to Lady Maclairn's affectionate greetings and tender solicitudes; to Mrs. Allen's soothing cares; to Miss Cowley's encouraging smiles and animating conversations. These thoughts will intrude; and I cannot yet treat them as intruders. Yet I have my father: but *that father* is a source of my deepest sorrow! I see he is deceiving himself; that he cherishes the most fallacious of hopes: he thinks me better, because my pains are less acute. He sees not, that nature, worn out in the unequal struggle, is passively yielding to the inevitable, though still suspended stroke; and I have not the courage to tell him, that his Caroline is every hour hastening to her grave. A fever which eludes his notice, and profuse nightly perspirations, to which he is a stranger,

must soon be terminated. I am neither deceived, nor alarmed. I have made an acquaintance with my conqueror, which has stripped him of his terrors, and I find that aspect which is so appalling and so hideous when viewed from afar, and through the medium of this world's pleasures and gratifications, not unfriendly to the weary sufferer.

" I have weighed and measured my portion of painful existence, with that of the sinner, who, like 'the giant,' runneth his race to destruction;' and I am thankful. I have entered again and again into that seat of judgment, which none but the eye of my Maker can pervade: neither remorse nor fear assail me. I have been *an heedless* child; but never *a hardened one*, with my earthly parent; and how has he loved me! and can I for a moment tremble at the thought of meeting face to face, my Heavenly Father, my Almighty Friend, who knoweth that I am but dust

before him; and who has yet upheld me with tenderness and love? No, my dear Miss Cowley: imperfect as my services have been, manifold as have been my omissions of duty, I cannot forget that I have for my salvation a God of infinite mercy and goodness; and in hope I shall calmly resign up my spirit into his hands. I have been led into these reflections by the considerations of that gracious providence which has permitted me to see my dear father somewhat relieved from his late vexations, and which hath allowed to me the means of being useful to my sister. All has been done that we can do for her comfort. We must leave the future to her own conduct, and the principles of the man to whom she has so unguardedly trusted her happiness. I wish to entertain a favourable opinion of Mr. Fairly; but I am uncandid, or he is unworthy. He disgusts me by his attentions and flattery to my poor mother, his fulsome and

ridiculous fondness to his wife before my father. With me he affects a pragmatical gravity and importance, talks of my wonderful wisdom, patience, and fortitude, 'till he convinces me, that I am peevish and irrascible. Poor Lydia is either overlooked or reproved by him, with an impertinence which my mother and Leonora ought to check. The consequence is, that she detests him; and has moped in her own room till she is unwell. She grieves also, poor thing! for Willet's removal from the family. This young woman, whom you will recollect was with us at the Hall, was a favourite with my mother, and in fact Lydia's companion and friend: indeed, we all liked her as a useful well-behaved young person. Willet, however, took offence on finding at our return hither, a house-keeper installed in office, by Mrs. Tomkins, at my father's and mother's request, during our absence: she was impertinent, and not

chusing to make concessions, or to accept of the station my mother chose for her, she quitted her good lady and her dear Miss Lydia for another service. I have been a gainer by this change in our administration. Willet was too lively to be useful to me; and we have gained a prize in the good woman whom Mrs. Tomkins recommended to us. Mrs. Thornton has so pleased my dear father, that he has in his fond consideration promoted her to a place of more trust than the housekeeper's room—she is now my constant attendant; and her daughter superintends below stairs with great regularity and diligence.

"My mother has been absent from home nearly a fortnight. She accompanied Mr. Fairly and Nora to his house, near Chelmsford in Essex; with the intention of seeing that it was a suitable abode for her daughter. I was much gratified with my sister's reply on the occasion. She said she should be happy with

any accommodations in the country. I suspect poor Nora has in the course of a few short weeks discovered that she has gained but little by exchanging the yoke of her tender and generous father, for the chains of wedlock, a regimental suit, and a handsome man. She is not in spirits. Since her departure she has written twice to my father; her expressions of gratitude, paid him for his money, and I believe they were dictated by her feelings. She mentions the house as being all she wishes, but that her too *fond* and *anxious* husband thinks it stands in need of repairs, and that it cannot be made a suitable residence for her for less than *fifteen hundred pounds*. The money was instantly advanced; and Leonora, in her second letter informed us, that Mr. Fairly had consented to live at the farm till the house was ready for them. There was an appearance of content and triumph in this letter which delighted me: She spoke of her plans of furnishing it

neatly: of her garden; and of the happiness she hoped to find in a cottage orné.

"Yesterday, instead of my mother, whom we expected, arrived a letter from her, dated from Reveland Park, the seat of a rich nabob, called Anthony Dangle, Esq. His house borders on Mr. Fairly's little estate, and his lady, recently married, was one of Nora's school companions. My poor dear mother writes in raptures of the grandeur and style of Reveland Park: the table, the society, and the politeness of the young mistress of the mansion, who at eighteen or nineteen, purchased with her beauty and accomplishments, the state of an Asiatic princess, and a husband of forty, already a cripple with the dead palsy. Leonora will be her guest for some time: in the exultation of my mother's heart she hopes they will keep her till her own *'little box'* is ready; for Nora is adored at the Park. Can you blame me, if my anxious and apprehensive mind recurs to

the story of the Homespun family? Alas! no: you are too judicious not to see the danger of such connections as these, to *my mother.*"

"This letter, my dear Miss Cowley, will not amuse you, but it will make its appeal to your good nature: you will think of the invalid who has beguiled three or four tedious days of their allotted dullness, in writing it: you will think you see her raising her languid eyes to heaven, whilst she breathes out a petition for your happiness; and you will think with kindness of the grateful and obliged

"CAROLINE SERGE."

"P. S. I shall say nothing of my *brother*, Malcolm Maclairn. Ah! would to heaven I had a more legitimate claim to use that title, than even his kindness has given me. What a difference in Nora's fate would such a man have made! It is not possible for me to tell you, how

gentle how humane, his conduct was to us on the road. But he is a good and a virtuous man; and may the Almighty bless him! My father writes to Sir Murdoch, or to him, I believe; he desires to have my letter to enclose. I expect to see my mother in a few days, and Mrs. Tomkins will be with us to-morrow evening, to pass some time at Putney."

LETTER LII.

To Malcolm Maclairn, from Mr. Serge.

"My dear young Friend,"

"HAVING received from your good father more compliments than I asked,

and less information than I wanted, relative to the plans in which you were engaged with Mr. Wilson, when I was at Tarefield, I have taken my measures in my own way, and with better success; for Wilson and I have managed the business without compliments or demurs; and you are fairly *lurched*, if you be a young man too proud to accept of a kindness from a true friend. Hoping you will see the drift of my meaning, I send you a draft on my banker for a thousand pounds: it is placed in your name, and herewith you have his acknowledgment. Get married and settle at once: have no fears: I will take care of my farm and my farmer. Let your nest be well lined: I send the bill for that intent; meaning to take care myself of all without doors. Your answer to this will either break the thread of our love, or join it till death; for it will either show me, that you do not know Jeremiah Serge, or that he does not know

Malcolm Maclairn. However, guessing where the "shoe will pinch," I will say that when I want my money again I will ask you to pay it. And in the mean time receive a good interest for it in your good will and kindness. So may God prosper you, and my money thus employed!

"I am your loving friend,

"JEREMIAH SERGE."

[*Miss Cowley's pen is employed in what follows.*]

I was with Lady Maclairn when her son read her this letter. I cannot describe to you the various changes of her countenance, whilst he was so doing. Her lips trembled, and with difficulty she asked him whether Sir Murdoch would be satisfied to see his son established in life by Mr. Serge. Malcolm answered that his father left him to act as his own judgment directed: that he had convinced him of the probability of being

able to repay his generous friend, and that it was in fact a good speculation for Mr. Serge. "But," added he, "I am not governed altogether by this consideration in my purpose of accepting Mr. Serge's kindness. I am not too proud to receive favours; nor so mean as to court them. The voluntary offering of an honest and generous heart shall be received with a frank and honest gratitude, and I may live, my dear mother, *to give*, as well as *to receive* benefits. At any rate I am not worthless, and my benefactor will not have to blush for his predilection in my favour; for I shall never forget his kindness. And the prospect! my dear Miss Cowley," added he, seizing my hand as if it had been Alice's, "is it not too alluring for romantic scruples, and a fastidious pride to combat." I smiled; and he now eagerly ran over the advantages which would ultimately accrue from the Wereland Farm: expatiated on the hap-

piness before him; and in the most unqualified manner adverting to Miss Flint's dissolution as a contingency that would not break his heart, he drew a picture of domestic peace and comfort, to which his affection gave the most glowing colours. "We shall then taste the blessings of union and love undisturbed," said he. "My Alice will reverence and serve my mother; and we shall see her smile, and bless our infants" The poor mother answered only with her tears. "Why do you weep?" asked he, with tenderness. "It is because I fear, my dear Malcolm," replied she, "that this cup of joy will never reach my lips." "It is I that ought to have this doubt to check my present contentment," answered he seriously, "whilst I see my mother wasting her health and spirits on——." She prevented his finishing; and with a gentle smile asked him, whether he had seen Mr. Wilson. He replied in the negative,

adding that he was then going. "Do not forget to tell your friends," said she, "that Lady Maclairn means to write to Mr. Serge, and to thank him for having rendering her son happy." Malcolm kissed her glowing cheek, and withdrew. "Poor fellow!" said she, the instant the door closed, "how little does he know that nothing on this side of the grave can make *his mother happy!* I see your surprise, my dear Miss Cowley," added she, weeping, you are not prepared for the frankness with which I now confess that there has been *for years* a canker worm in this bosom, which has not only destroyed my peace, but which has also tainted my *very face* by its baleful influence. You are yet a stranger to the woman before you; notwithstanding that penetration which has shown you that she is not what she *wishes to appear.* I have perceived your suspicions; and in a thousand instances, have marked your but too accu-

rate conclusions. I have had lately to struggle, not only with my secret sorrow, but with the acute sense of being suspected *as a deceitful woman* by that being to whom I stand indebted for the only comfort of my life: by my husband's friend and consoler! Yet, Miss Cowley, my soul is yearning to convince you that it is honest and sincere. I must explain to you the causes which have imposed upon me a conduct of duplicity and deceit. I want a friend, Miss Cowley: yes, I want a friend, in whose faithful bosom I may with safety place a secret that oppresses my own, and which must destroy me. I have for some time resolved to take this step. You will, I think, be disposed to grant me your compassion, if the narrative I mean to place before you should exclude me from your friendship and esteem." She spoke with so much energy and feeling, that I was confounded, and remained silent. "I distress your generous mind,"

continued she, "but recollect your conduct; recall the numberless instances in which your candour and goodness have been exerted to spare the too conscious dissembler. I will only say a few words more: justice to myself demands them! Had not your firm refusal of Philip Flint rendered my purpose needless, you would have known his mother before you had been a week under this roof. I will not say what were my feelings when I found that this trial of my strength was spared me! You once invited me to call you *my daughter*," added she, renewing her tears. "Good God! could you at that moment have seen my heart! Could you but have conceived what then passed through my very soul! You were the child of my husband's fond and grateful love! You had saved him! But I was unworthy of you!" I am not made for moments of this kind, Lucy. I could not

speak: but hiding my face in her extended arms, I sobbed forth my feelings.

In continuation.—Lady Maclairn has this moment left me. I was shut up all yesterday in my apartment with a cold in my head, which you will place to the real cause. Sir Murdoch and Mrs. Allen made some remonstrances on my insisting that they should keep their engagements to dine at the Abbey. And you will judge that my time was fully engaged by the manuscripts I now send you.

Lady Maclairn took her tea with me, and with composure and dignity of manner, she said, "I see, my dear Miss Cowley, that I have taxed your sensibility severely. You are now acquainted with the unfortunate Harriet Flamall, and are now qualified to judge of her hopes and pretensions to your kindness." 'You are an angel,' exclaimed I, with honest fervour. 'Patience and suffering have made you

one, even before your time.' She mournfully shook her head. "I gratefully welcome the sentiment which has urged the misapplied epithet," said she. "I accept with joy and comfort the friendship which dictated it. *I know Miss Hardcastle.* Do you, my dear Miss Cowley, prepare her for her knowledge of *me*. Tell her, that you have received me as a guest worthy of your pure bosom. Send her the manuscripts, and ask her whether two hearts will not be needful to shelter mine from the oppression under which it groans. The dread of having those papers in my possession," added she, "has frequently tempted me to destroy them. Yet I wish to leave some memorial behind me, to witness that my soul abhorred deceit, and that even under the cruel yoke of it, my principles were firmly those which rectitude teaches. The peace and honour of my husband and son were of too much consequence to be hazarded by my impa-

tience under the dependence to which my own weakness had reduced me. Miss Flint's caprices and temper have been to me *petty evils*; and my conformity to her will has been amply recompensed by the reflection that I have served as a barrier, although a weak one, to passions that would have betrayed her more to censure and reproach. She wanted not my brother's arguments to mislead her, but she was a stranger to his artifices. And to whom but myself was it owing that she knew the betrayer of her integrity and honour? Can you any longer be surprised that I have yielded up to motives so powerful, that independence, which under every privation of fortune I should have called *blessedness* to the life I have passed under this roof. Oh, you know not, Miss Cowley," added she, weeping bitterly, "what I have endured! But what was I, if not useful in contributing to Sir Murdoch Maclairn's comfort and happi-

ness! I had deceived him, and imposition was my *hard* duty. How often have I wished that my *death* could have been as beneficial to him, as a life miserable, though devoted to his service!"

You will love and reverence this woman, Lucy. I am certain you will. Sedley will give you this packet. You will understand my caution. I have written to Mary in French, expressly to prevent her inquiries. Let me know that the manuscript is safe in your hands, and that you concur with your perhaps too impetuous,

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. We were reading a beautiful work of Mrs. Inchbald's, called, "The Simple Story," when the vagrants returned. Red eyes and defluxions in the head are the least of these tributes which this novel merits. Ours escaped all further inquiry.

Manuscript intended for Sir Murdock Maclairn, from his Wife, and sent to Miss Hardcastle by Miss Cowley.

THE vows of fidelity, of obedience, of love, and gratitude, which the obscure Harriet Flamall plighted at the altar with you, my Maclairn, were registered in heaven; and I am prepared to answer undismayed, the inquiry which will be made relatively to my *performance* of *my duties as your wife.* Yes, I am prepared! and God and man will acquit me of having deviated from my duty in the course of *that honourable character.* But to what tribunal shall I appeal, when called upon to answer to the charge of deceit, of imposition, of falsehood! Of having imposed on thy generous confidence, and of having worn a *name* and a title to which I had *no right*, and which I have *contaminated?* Is there not a refuge for the penitent? Has not the Almighty promised to forgive

his contrite erring children; and will Maclairn's noble mind, refuse pity and compassion to an offender whom he loves? *He cannot*: for it is his delight to walk in the path his Maker hath appointed, and to honour him, by imitating him who is perfect in his goodness. The history of my life will contain all that I have to urge in extenuation of my errors. I am induced to place it before you, by the hope, that it may produce on your mind a conviction, that I was not deliberately, systematically wicked; and that as having been *deceived*, I am an object for commiseration, though not justified for *having deceived others*.

HISTORY OF THE FLAMALL FAMILY.

You know but little more of my family and connexions, my dear Maclairn, than that I was the only daughter of a reputable attorney, who lived respected in modest affluence; and who died as he had

lived, with an unblemished character. My mother, whose understanding and virtue would have done honour to any station in life, died when I was in my ninth year; and in her last illness she requested my father to place me, after her decease, in the house of the lady who had instructed her; and with whom she had continued to live on terms of intimacy and mutual regard. This lady's seminary had been gradually establishing itself in the opinion of the public, from the time that my mother had been one of its pupils; and it was at this period justly considered as one of the most respectable boarding-schools in London. Friendship for my mother, added to the governing principles of this excellent woman's mind, produced a tenderness for me, which was necessary in the first instance of my removal from my indulgent father; but I soon found that in my good governess I had a friend, and my school insensibly

became my home. During this period of my life, I enjoyed every advantage which my fond father could supply; and his liberality extended to whatever was judged suitable for girls of large fortunes. It is unnecessary to mention Miss Flint's arrival, as a boarder, during my long residence in this house; but as I was two or three years younger than herself, I had formed my little *coterie;* and as I was not particularly attracted by her manners, we had no further intercourse, than such as resulted from being under the same roof. With the partiality of my father and my governess, I happily enjoyed peculiar marks of affection from my brother, who was some years my senior; and to him I stood indebted for my instruction in those branches of female accomplishments, which, as being very expensive from the attendance of capital masters, my father might have thought unnecessary for a girl in my station; but my brother judged of my ta-

lents so favourably, that no improvement could be useless to me. I had just gained my sixteenth year, when my dear father was suddenly removed, and my happiness interrupted. My governess kept me as a cherished guest till some days after the funeral, when she gave up her charge to an affectionate brother. It may not be improper to mention here an event which soon after deprived me of this inestimable friend. Easy on the side of fortune, and breaking in health, she gave up her school to another person, and retired to the west of England, where she had near relations. My grief for the loss of my father was for some time countenanced by the dejection of my brother Philip's spirits, and I discovered it to be my duty to restrain my tears before him. I even attempted the office of consoler, and assumed a cheerfulness with him which was remote from my feelings. One day I particularly endeavoured to lead him to a more resign-

submission to the will of Heaven. He
ok his head, and in a desponding tone,
ied, "that he should not need my
ndly admonition, could he forget his
r, but it was for *his Harriet* that he
ved." An explanation followed. My
er's death had been accelerated by the
ficulties which pressed upon him: he
just escaped being insolvent. Philip
incautiously, or rather with the honest
de of sparing to himself, and me, a dis-
ce so humiliating, administered; and
effects had been inadequate to the de-
nds. He had consulted his friends:
d met with assistance and encourage-
nt; and had every hope that diligence
d economy would in time extricate him
m his difficulties. In the mean time,
as his blessing; and if I could submit
th cheerfulness to superintend his fami-
for a season, he should be happy, and
k forward to my more eligible situation.
: now mentioned his connections, and

the chances which were in his favour: hinting that my father had at least left him the integrity attached to his name, and a knowledge in his profession which none could dispute. I was not intimidated by this confidence, but I reminded him that my education had qualified me for a teacher: and that with Mrs. D—'s recommendation I had no doubt of being able to provide for myself. "We have one and the same interest," replied he, "to conceal our affairs from Mrs. D—, and from all the world. Whilst by my exertions I can keep matters as they now stand, I shall not be suspected of being a necessitous man. You know not the world you live in, my dear Harriet: we must keep up appearances, in order to surmount our difficulties. You are young and beautiful, and in time, may marry well. Till you can make a better exchange for my protection and love, than by degrading yourself, my last guinea

shall be spent to support you. Have no fears, I will support my sister's claims to respect: you shall never serve for *wages*, till those of love fail." Penetrated by this goodness and generosity, it will be no matter of surprise to you, my dear Mackairn, that I trusted to this brother; and repaid his kindness by the most assiduous attention to his comforts and interest. For nearly a year I superintended his family with contentment; for Philip praised without ceasing his housekeeper, and frequently declared that he would not change me for the richest wife in the kingdom; for that I had established his credit by my management. I saw three clerks constantly employed in the office, my brother's regular attendance, and every appearance of business as in my father's time going on. The new year's day, I was told, that he was happy; for he could without inconvenience augment his dear Harriet's little allowance for clothes; that he wished

to see me always dressed like Harriet Flamall, and the gentlewoman; though never like a girl on the look-out for a husband, or a simpleton ready to take up with any offer. I well understood that my brother was little disposed to favour what are called love-matches, at which his wit and ridicule were constantly pointed; but as I was neither exposed to those temptations, nor in any haste to change my condition, I received these indications of his prudence with gratitude; perfectly coinciding with him, that love was not the better for being houseless and unfed; and as I had no wealthy suitors, though some danglers, I was perfectly contented with being mistress of my brother's house, and seeing it his abode of peace. With youthful spirits and youthful vanity, I exulted in the regularity which presided at his table, and my heart was gay, when Philip said, "his Harriet was never taken by surprise, nor unfit to be seen." Kind-

s had given me an interest with his
vants, which were two maids, and a
t-boy; and when my brother led a
nd to his table, they good-naturedly
ot, that they had shared with their
tress the liver and bacon, or tripe, in
er to sup on more costly viands. My
ther's person and address were much
his favour, and it was not without some
sement on my part, that our acquaint-
ce "wondered that the handsome and
reable Mr. Flamall did not marry."
me hints given me by our chamber-
id, who, as I fancied, thought her mas-
"too sober a gentleman," led me to
spect, that my brother had formed
me connexion which stood in the way
a more honourable one; and whilst his
ular visits into the country, in one cer-
n direction, strengthened my suspi-
ns, I could not help doing him justice
the consideration with which I was
arded from a knowledge of this sup-

posed irregularity in his conduct; and sensible that his cautions in regard to mine were scrupulously exact and proper, I prudently left Philip to judge of the propriety of his own actions; and with unbounded trust believed, that if he erred, it was because he was human, and could not be altogether perfect, as I sometimes fondly thought him; whilst with the utmost solicitude he recommended to me the improvement of my time, and the prudence necessary for my security.

Under these happy circumstances of life, did I reach my seventeenth year, when towards the autumn, I was requested to prepare for the accommodation of a young man, who was to reside with us. Philip perceived my surprise. "It was not possible for me to avoid receiving him under my roof," added he; "his mother pressed the measure on me, with so much earnestness from her death-bed, that I

ld not the resolution to refuse her re-
uest; and standing as I do in the rela-
on of a guardian to the young man, who
s not a single connexion or friend in the
orld to whom he can turn, except my-
lf, it is the more incumbent on me to
ovide for his safety. He is a modest
d, but at present a mere green-horn.
e has been very ill since he has been in
wn, and I should not be surprised,
with his excessive sorrow for the loss
his only friend, and the effects of his
readful fever, he be plunged into a de-
line. You will be kind to him, my
ear Harriet," continued he, "for you
ill pity him. If we can manage to get
him well, he will become my pupil in the
office, for he is poor, and must have some
employment. He is sensible of this, and
grateful for the education and little means
which Mrs. Duncan has contrived to leave
him."

A sick, consumptive, friendless youth,

oppressed with sorrow for a mother's death, was a guest not to be placed in any inferior part of our house; my bed room was visited by the south sun, and had next to it, a light dressing closet, appropriated for my books and bureau: I was healthy; and the attic was equally convenient. The poor, dejected young man should find a home, and a neat retreat and the books might help to divert his thoughts. This resolution was adopted. The following week, Mr. Charles Dunbar made his appearance at our dining table; and on introducing him to me, Philip congratulated him with kindness on his improved good looks; whilst I, with emotions of pity, gazed on the finest youth my eyes ever beheld, blasted by sorrow and sickness. His deep mourning dress, the sober-sadness and dignity of his person, his collected demeanour and unstudied ease of manners, surprised me. From time to time, he spoke; his intelligent

eyes were raised; and as the subject adverted to the recent events, his countenance marked the keenest sensibility, and the most profound grief. Without any of that aukward timidity, which I had been led to expect, he with politeness made his apologies for wishing to retire to his room, alledging that he had made exertions during the morning, which had fatigued him. Philip with much civility conducted him to his apartment. I had risen to receive his compliment on leaving the room, and felt a secret delight in reflecting, that he would find the one he sought suitable in those accommodations which he had a just title to expect under any roof. I still remained standing, lost in thoughts which perplexed me. The extreme caution of my brother in respect to me, seemed to have yielded to his zeal for a stranger; and I felt uneasy that I could not think Mr. Duncan a *lad just new to the world.* "But he is poor and

friendless," thought I, "and my brother trusts to those disqualifications for my safety." A deep sigh followed; for I discovered, that poverty was no shield to my bosom. My brother's returning steps roused me from my reverie, and I sat down to the piano forte, to prevent my agitation from being noticed, and began to play a lesson which lay open on the music-desk, in the hope of evading any further conversation, relative to a guest, who I already discovered had gained too much of my attention. But Philip immediately reassuming the subject, and thanking me for giving up my room to the stranger, asked me what I thought of him. "Poor young man," replied I, "he looks consumptive and very melancholy. I should not be surprised if the air of London was found pernicious to health apparently so weak and declining." "He must take his chance on that point," answered my bro-

ther, "and should your prognostics be verified, I do not know whether I should regret his death. Under the circumstances of an illegitimate birth and friendless condition, life can afford but a very scanty portion for his hopes or enjoyments. It appears," continued my brother, "that Duncan, as he is called, is one of those unhappy beings, who are destined to share the iniquity of their mothers. His probably has worn the cloak of hypocrisy and concealment so long, that she has forgotten it was borrowed, or that she was the mother of a child whom she did not dare to acknowledge. I know that the good woman who has passed for his mother has left him a few hundred pounds, the savings from an annuity allowed her for this child's maintenance from his cradle." "But you know also his real mother," observed I with eagerness. "Indeed I do not," answered Philip, "nor does Duncan know her. I have some reasons

for believing she lives in a foreign country; is a woman of birth and fortune; and probably one of those chaste dames, who thinks 'the world can never thrive,' &c. &c. I am sorry," continued my brother, "that I was not sooner known to Mrs. Duncan. I might have gained more insight into this poor young fellow's history, and perhaps his mother might have been induced to continue his annuity. But it was too late to press the business on a dying woman. She only declared, that she was not the real mother of Charles, commonly called Duncan; and requested he might be told so. I trusted to her papers for further information, but nothing satisfactory has appeared; and for the present, I think it is better to leave him to his regrets for the loss of his reputed mother, than to the bitter conviction of his birth and desertion." I entirely coincided in Philip's opinion; and our conference finished by my admiring

his goodness and humanity, and vehemently reprobating the monster who could give up an infant to save herself from the reproach and shame she alone merited.

Mr. Duncan's health, for the space of more than a month, gave an ostensible colour to my attentions. I had pity, for the motive of an assiduity which, young as I was, my heart whispered was but the assumed name for love. My brother trusting, as I concluded, to the effects of his intelligence relative to his ward's fortune and disgraceful birth, for the security of a girl of seventeen, whose good sense and prudence were proverbial with him, left the interesting invalid to my unremitting cares, till the bloom of youth was restored, and Mr. Duncan was deemed in a condition to pass some hours in the office, in pursuance of his declared intention of studying the law. To what purpose should I detail the progress of a passion mutually excited under such circum-

stances as I have already mentioned? Let it suffice, that my lover was a stranger to the arts of seduction, and myself too inexperienced for the documents of worldly prudence, and too innocent for doubts or cautions.

Amongst the number of expedients we had ingeniously contrived, to elude my brother's knowledge of our union, till Mr. Duncan was of age, was one which appeared practicable and safe: my lover suggested it, and related to me the interest he had with the good woman under whose roof his mother had died. It appeared to him a providential interference, that had conducted them to Mrs. Keith's humane cares; for such was the name of the person with whom they lodged. "My dear mother," added Mr. Duncan, "was indebted to chance for the recommendation of lodgings in London, when she was a stranger. At Grantham we took up a lady apparently of some respec-

tability in the neighbourhood of that town, for she was in a gentleman's carriage, when she inquired at the inn the hour at which the stage coach would reach London. She was a handsome, pleasant, and well-bred woman, and good-humouredly communicative. My mother, in the course of our journey, expressed some regret on not having written to her only agent in town, to secure lodgings for her, observing that she did not much enjoy the thoughts of being forced to sleep in a common inn. The courteous stranger instantly engaged to conduct us herself to lodgings which she could recommend, adding, that her uncle, Counsellor Peachley, had recently quitted his apartments, for a country residence near town, and that by agreement, or rather favour, the Keiths had permission to let the rooms in his absence, for their own emolument. But this indulgence was, it appeared, limited; and the lady's good offices were

requisite to our success. She kindly performed her promise, and I believe was farther useful to us in the distressing scenes which followed. My gratitude on leaving this house for your brother's, him, I believe, attached Keith and his wife to me. He serves the office of clerk in this parish church, and might assist us effectually. Your brother," added he smiling, "pays his devoirs regularly every Sunday in the country. You are tempted by a more popular preacher, to stray from Mr. G——'s flock, and I suspect that your servants are not scrupulous in the observance of their sabbath."

I complied with a project from which I had little to fear, well knowing that my brother's example had been contagious in his family. Our banns were published: Keith officiated as father at the altar, and his wife as my friend and companion, my appearance not contradicting hers. My husband demanded a certificate of our

marriage, and I returned home with it in my bosom unsuspected.

With a circumspection rarely preserved in a union, where the sum total of years did not amount to forty, we eluded for a time all suspicion. My situation became the signal for terror and anxiety to break into that contentment of heart, which had succeeded to our marriage.

Duncan in vain urged the necessity of his openly declaring his claims to protect me. I opposed to his arguments my dependence on my brother, and his minority, which would for some months prevent his free agency. I pleaded the expected absence of Philip, who constantly left town in the summer vacation; and sanguinely brought forwards my project of preserving our secret by means of Mrs. Keith: thus passed the early months of my pregnancy. But I was unable to counterfeit health. My brother was alarmed by my cough; and my friends recom-

mended to me country air. At this eventful period, *Mrs. Hatchway* with her daughter, now Mrs. Serge, paid their annual visit to London. Mr. Hatchway was master of a ship, and his wife and only child, Miss Lydia, contented with its accommodations, and fond of an element with which they were too familiar for fear, every summer made this little voyage; and stationing themselves in Wapping, enjoyed with unwearied activity the more remote and fashionable pleasures of the metropolis. They were our relations; and dining in Red-Lion square from time to time, during their short stay, had been the customary offering of good-will, and for which they liberally paid, by supplying us with turkies and red herrings in the winter. Their remembrances of this kind had been so abundant, that we on our side had enlarged our civilities; and Philip had for the two preceding visits, treated them

with a sight of Sadler's Wells, or the Haymarket. On seeing my pale and emaciated form, they expressed much compassion; and, with the *utmost generosity*, they declared I should not be hurried to a crowd, in order to please them. My brother as warmly insisted that Miss Hatchway should not be disappointed of her amusement; and this contest finished by the good-natured mother's *heroically* saying, she preferred remaining with me. During the absence of the party, my ill-health was the subject of her conversation. Change of air and a voyage were urged: she was certain that sea air would restore me in a month. She remembered that her mother, before her marriage, was thought in a decline; and had been cured by residing a few months at Y——h. I immediately saw the advantages which might result from my quitting my brother's house; but I had my husband to consult. This, however, I happily ef-

fected; for my restless cousin recollected a shop near us, in which she had purchased some article a few days before, and she wished for more of it. My cough again befriended me; it was near nine o'clock, and the evening unpleasant, so she sallied forth alone. My husband blessed heaven for this promised deliverance; he urged me to accept of the invitation, and declared that he would remove me from Y——h to Newcastle, and from thence to Leith: for that I should not return to my brother's, till my spirits were more equal to meet his resentment. At supper, the good captain seconded his lady. "He had long piloted his women." The cabin was neat; and I had nothing to fear in the "Charlotte." My brother counselled me to try the experiment; and my voyage was determined on. At the expiration of a few days the ship sailed. Our navigation was prosperous and delightfully pleasant. I was in no way

incommoded; and the good friends with me, exulted on seeing me keenly devour sea-biscuit. Freed from the dread of my brother's inquisitorial eyes, and amused by the novelty of the scene, my spirits rose to cheerfulness; and I was led to consider my female friends with some curiosity and amusement. Mrs. Serge, at present, so strongly resembles her good mother in her person, that it is only necessary to observe that when young, she was extremely pretty. Nature had not been less faithful in the lineaments of their minds. Both enjoyed an exuberance of health and activity; a constant flow of animal spirits and good humour; to which was annexed an absence of thought or attention for the morrow. My observations soon led me, however, to doubt, whether their sum of positive happiness exceeded that of their fellow mortals. Their constant restlessness; their insatiable cravings for vanity and pleasure, might be fairly weighed

with the cares of the ambitious, and the labours of the philosopher; and most assuredly were as fatiguing as the demands of vanity. A "frolic," to use Mrs. Hatchway's term for a jaunt of pleasure, was the supreme good in her opinion: it was necessary to her existence; and however qualified, all was a "*frolic*" which put her spirits in motion. Having been wet to the skin in an open cart; or slept in a barn on straw, or in a bed with half a dozen companions, only gave zest to the remembrance of the "fun" occasioned by any disaster. If the pleasure had smoothly rolled on in post-chaises, and a good dinner, and a good inn received them, their joy was complete; "for what was money made for, but to be spent? Those who *worked* had a right to *spend*." No grievance tormented them, but being stationary; nor did they believe there was a malady which a dance would not cure. To people of this description I could only

plead the weakness of my bodily strength. We were safely landed at Y——h, the captain proceeding in his voyage to Sunderland. A neat habitation announced the opulence of my friends in that class to which they belonged. The first day was passed in settling ourselves, which was performed with admirable dispatch and order; for Mrs. Hatchway observed, that, "after a holiday, idleness was ingratitude." The next day was given to their neighbours, who were numerous; but I was indulged, and in my neat little chamber enjoyed the privilege of writing to my husband. At supper, my cousin told me, she had engaged me to see a ship launched. "We shall breakfast," added she, "with the captain's wife, who lives on the quay. As soon as the vessel floats, we shall go on board, and sail in her down the river. You will see also the fort and the pier; and in the evening we shall return home in *cars*; they are the fashion here, and

the exercise they give, is strongly recommended to invalids." I had seen scores of these vehicles moving in the street, and instantly imagined that a *wheelbarrow*, although drawn by a horse, would not suit me. I pleaded fatigue, and without the smallest ill-humour appearing, I was told, that no welcome was worth a farthing, if folks were not left to judge for themselves: "so please yourself, my dear Harriet," added she, "and you will please me. I hope to see you, before you leave us, as eager to run after a fiddle, and as fond of a ride in a cart as this girl, who two years since was as fond of her own room as yourself; but I soon made her what you see her, as healthy a girl as any in England; and her aunt will tell you so, when she comes. I have no notion of patch-work, and darning muslin, which costs so dearly; Lydia was half killed by being with my sister. You will take care of yourself, my love," continued she;

"Sarah will be left with you; and I can trust her."

She was not mistaken; Sarah was assiduous, and my tranquillity continued uninterrupted till one o'clock, when she informed me, that Mrs. Priscilla Hatchway, her master's sister, was in the parlour, and wished to see me. "There has been some blunder," added the girl; "for she is come to dine with my mistress." Civility compelled me to leave my retreat. A neat well-dressed woman of forty and upwards, rose to salute me, and with much good-nature congratulated me on my safe arrival. For some time I found my guest an intruder; but she insensibly engaged my attention, by talking of my mother, and flattered my self love, by observing, that I was her very picture. I learned that Mrs. Priscilla had fully expected to meet the family party. "I sent my sister word, yesterday," continued she smiling, "of my intention; but

a ship-launch was too serious a business for me to interrupt, and they well know I am not apt to take offence where none is intended."

After dinner she proposed to me a walk; to this I had no objection; and she took the road to the fort. The level and fine turf I trod, with the prospect in view, beguiled the time: for on the left was the main ocean, and on the right the river, which, at the fort, forms the bar and the pier, useful for working the vessels from and into the harbour. We reached the ferry-boat which led to a village on the opposite side of the river; and we sat down. "I have had my designs in conducting you hither," said she; "that," pointing to a small neat habitation, "is my house; and you see how easy the road is which separates us. Have you any objections to our drinking tea there? I will conduct you home; and if the vagrants are returned, I will sup with them; for

it is a full moon, and the boatman will wait my call." I acceded to this arrangement, and we soon reached the house, but with some surprise found the parlour filled with Mrs. Hatchway's friends, and she busily engaged in assisting the maid, to prepare a regale of fruit and tea. The good Mrs. Priscilla received with momentary gravity her sister's greetings and apology. This amounted, to having forgotten, in her hurry, to send her notice of her engagement, and intention of calling upon her in her way home. To this succeeded her pleasure of seeing me. "Nothing ever was more fortunate! for they expected a cart, and I might ride home." The company now claimed our attention. This consisted of several persons, but the principal care of Mrs. Hatchway was directed to a lady who had been "uncomfortable" on board the ship, being fearful of the water. I found she was from the country, and with her husband had a daughter of Miss Lydia's age. A survey

of Mrs. Priscilla's parlour pleased me; it was furnished with good prints, and a handsome book-case; the windows commanded the sea, and a pretty garden hung from the elevated ground to the river. I expressed my approbation of her abode; and in the kindest manner she pressed me to try, what she called, *country* as well as *sea* air. I thanked her, and acknowledged that I thought her situation delightful. "Then sleep here to night," answered she eagerly, "I will show you my little spare nest." I looked at Mrs. Hatchway. "Please yourself, and you will please me," said she with her usual good-humour. "Do, my dear Miss Flamall, consent to my aunt's proposal," cried Miss Lydia; "for then I shall see Beecles races." This settled the business. The strangers were accommodated with my room at Mrs. Hatchway's house, and my trunk was sent, for greater dispatch, that evening; and before my eyes were open

the next morning, my Y——h friends were on the road to Beeckes races. They called in their way at our door, and said their absence would not be for more than a *week*. On the maid-servant's delivering this message at our comfortable breakfast table, Mrs. Priscilla laughed, and said that her sister's *weeks* were not always regulated by the calendar: she had known some, that had extended to *six* of the common reckoning of time, "and should either a wedding, a christening, or a funeral intervene," added she, "you may find this "*frolic*" longer than you wish, unless you love quiet as well as I do." You will not be surprised that I wished for nothing but for letters from my Charles, and the prolongation of my friend's pleasures.

Duncan was made easy by my account of myself, and my new situation. I was happy in his assured love, and we mutually agreed to wait with patience till he

could see me at G—ne. A fortnight had nearly elapsed; when, in the place of an expected letter from my husband, one arrived from Mrs. Hatchway. Fortune had been favourable. She was detained in spite of herself. Lydia was to be bride-maid to her young friend, and having had a letter from her husband, to inform her that he was going to Leith, she had indulged her friends in their request. Even this good news did not cheer me. I had missed receiving my cordial for two posts. The sympathizing Mrs. Priscilla dispatched a person the next morning to the Y——h post-office, and endeavoured to divert my attention till the woman's return. She brought me a letter: it had my brother's writing on the address. I turned pale, I suppose; for she smiled, observing that I might have another, and still more welcome letter on the morrow. "It is from my brother," answered I, still mournfully holding the fatal scroll in

my hand." "Well, and you may have good news from *your brother*," replied she, rising. "So I will go and get you some strawberries, whilst you are busy."

Merciful heaven! From what unknown cause did it arise that I remained several minutes with this letter unopened in my hand! I recollected that I had not answered a former one, and that Philip hated writing letters. Some unknown terror seized my spirits; and I wept. At length I was mistress of its contents. "An *unpleasant*," (yes, that was the word,) "occurrence had engaged his time, and harassed his mind. *His ward, Duncan*, had absconded; a charge of a highway-robbery having been lodged against him at the Bow-street office. He had been summoned on the occasion to answer to some questions relative to the young offender; but he was sorry to say that his evidence in his favour could not set aside the proofs of his guilt. He had, however,

acted prudently in withdrawing from the threatened prosecution. "I have done all in my power," added my brother, "to soften his accuser, but he is a determined man; and says that he cannot recede, in justice to the community, nor to himself." Much followed, in which my brother's vexation had for its object his own *reputation*, and the mortification of having it known that he had had connexions with a highway-robber.

I did not faint on reading this hateful letter: no: I did not die, when death would have been a blessing! but grasping it with convulsive force, my whole frame shivering as in an ague fit, I remained motionless on my chair, conscious of the overwhelming tide of misery which was bursting on my head. At last impelled by ideas too dreadful to be recalled, and too vague to be ascertained, I hurried down stairs. The kitchen was my passage to the garden, and the fire, I believe at-

tracted me; for I sat down by it, in a great-chair, which had its station in the chimney-corner, and bending over the hearth, my nerves relaxing; the horrid paper fell from my hand, and heedless of my danger, I gazed on the flame it raised. The maid-servant at this moment entered, and screaming out, that, "my gown would take fire," recalled me to recollection. I started, and with a deep drawn sigh, said "let me die!" When recalled to *life*, I found myself in my bed. My worthy friend was watching me: her looks bespoke distress and pity. "Be comforted," said she, "you are safe with me. Be composed, and trust to my care." Let it suffice, Harriet Flamall was saved from reproach and shame, and like thousands of her unhappy sex, was doomed to weep the loss of her infant, and to be thankful it lived not to partake of its mother's disgrace. Mrs. Priscilla Hatchway was,

however, informed of my situation, and she advised me to give her my marriage certificate, which I had worn in my bosom. She enforced the prudence of my keeping my marriage a secret, till Mr. Dutton appeared. His letters to me had prepossessed her in his favour. "She did not believe he was capable of such an outrage as that of which he was accused." Every hour she repeated that it was impossible, and that it required with her more than presumptive proof to condemn any one, much more one whose sentiments were noble and pure.

I am prolix, my dear Maclairn: I will endeavour to be less so. Encouraged to hope, soothed to patience by this excellent woman, and, above all, led to think with her, that I should hear tidings of my husband from Mrs. Keith, I combated so effectually with my griefs, as to be able to suppress their appearance; and having seen my friends return to meet Captain

Hatchway, I preferred, for several reasons, the conveyance of his cabin to any other. We had a tedious passage, which was highly beneficial to me; for on reaching my home, I was congratulated on my *good looks*. My brother was on an excursion; and I profited from his absence.

I went to Mrs. Keith's house. It was shut up; and "*to be lett*." Ready to sink, I entered the opposite shop, and made my inquiries. "Keith had been taken up on suspicion of forgery. No one could tell what was become of his wife. Their goods had been seized by the proprietor of the house, which was very hard, as the Counsellor who lived in the apartments in the winter months, had bought every thing for his own use; and had generously permitted them to let the rooms for their benefit six months in the year." Some comments were added to this account: Mrs. Keith was pitied, and the shopkeeper finished by saying that it was a pity her

this occasion. I cannot pardon his ingratitude, for he was treated like a brother under my roof. However, when he can draw for his little fund, I shall see his name I do not doubt: in a few weeks more I shall hear that he has not forgotten the little money which he may without peril claim from me." The conversation then turned on the visitor's business, whom my brother attended a part of his way to town. I was forcibly struck by what I had heard. Duncan's cruel desertion of me; his apparent ingratitude to my brother; the society he had mixed in; his suspected crime, and neglect of writing, seized upon my heart. I resolved to conceal from my brother my connection with a reputed robber, and a man who had without pity left me to suffer the penalty of my weakness and credulity. My brother's peace was to be preserved; and I was firm to my purpose.

Again I remonstrated on the expence of

the lodgings. "Say not a word on that subject, my dear Harriet, I intreat you," answered Philip. "In preserving you, I am preserving my own comforts. I would spend my last shilling to see you well and *happy*; but till you have more confidence in my affection, I must despair." "What is it you mean?" asked I in trembling doubt. "Not to alarm, not to distress you," replied he with solemnity. "Are you really well enough to return home? Are you equal to the exertions which your return to society will demand? Can you be cheerful, and prepared for every accident? Answer these questions. I mean not to reproach; but *to heal*. I will not," continued he, taking my cold hand, "leave you in suspense. I am no stranger to your fatal engagements with an unprincipled man. Nothing of this indiscretion can be recalled; but in a discovery of *your marriage* is involved *my ruin* as well as your own. When you are

more composed, I will be more explicit: in the mean time rely on my prudence and love. Weak and erring as your conduct has been, I will yet entreat to your reason and principles. Let these resolve the question. Are your peace and happiness, my success and reputation in life, to be sacrificed to a romantic attachment to a *villain*, whose name is already a reproach to us, merely because we sheltered him?" He quitted me much agitated, and unable to witness my agony.

My brother's lenity was not lost upon me. Grateful for his forbearance, touched by his arguments, I assiduously endeavoured to appear what he wished. My occupations were renewed, and my serenity was such, as imposed on my acquaintance. The poor and wretched wanderer was regarded, as one whom it was my duty never to name, never to believe otherwise than guilty of the crime laid to his charge, nor ever to be acquitted of having abandoned me. Sometimes I

recalled to memory his conversations relative to his early life, and the suspicions he entertained of his not being Mrs. Duncan's son. Among the reasons he assigned for this opinion, was her anxiety to see him *accomplished*, as well as solidly instructed; her never proposing any plans for his future provision, and the silence she preserved in respect to his resources, and her own. I once mentioned to Mr. Duncan my brother's account of Mrs. Duncan's declaration. He was apparently agitated; and I regretted my too fond loquacity; whilst he endeavoured to console me for my indiscretion. In the variety of my painful reflections, I sometimes conjectured that Mr. Duncan had discovered his parents; and finding his rank and expectations incompatible with his engagements with me, had withdrawn from this kingdom: that he had even concerted the story which had been circulated; and trusting to a splendid name and fortune for favour with the world, had left the

name of Duncan to reproach and insult; and his wretched wife to sink into the grave. These ideas prevailed for a moment, and were then discarded with disdain, as unworthy of him and myself. Tenderness, trust, and his fond and unambitious heart had their turns. Thus fluctuating, I determined to speak to my brother, as he had said, that he would be more explicit with me, when I was in a more collected, treated with entire confidence, and I reminded him of his promise, adding, at the same time that I found the disorder which distracted my mind unfriendly to every purpose of my reason, and too much for my religious faith; I could not be resigned, till I was convinced that I should see my husband no more.

"I have expected the application," answered he, with calmness, "and I am prepared for it. It is not amiss that you should be informed of all that is known of this unhappy man. Notwithstanding our friends carefully avoid a subject, which

they well know has given me more vexation than any occurrence of my life, something may accidentally drop which will affect you. I have seen that my Harriet has fortitude; and when you are acquainted with the circumstances which have convinced me of this wretched man's guilt, you will the more steadily pursue that line of conduct which becomes you. I will leave you a few minutes to yourself," added he, unlocking his scrutoire, and taking from it a letter, which he gave me. "Only promise me, that you will not lose sight of your Philip, in your sorrow for a worthless husband." He pressed my hand to his bosom, and left the room. The letter before me was addressed to Mr. Flamall, in the well-known characters of my husband. I was still weeping over it, when Philip returned, and without speaking, placed himself opposite to me with visible anxiety. The contents of the letter were as follow.

From Charles Duncan to Mr. Elliott.

"Sir,

"YOU will see me no more. My mysterious conduct will be soon fatally explained to you. Let it suffice here, that I avow myself the husband of your sister, and that the purpose of my soul was to have seen, once more, my beloved, ruined wife. But I was not equal to the task of telling her, that she must forget *Charles Duncan*. Let her not curse him, gracious heaven! although he is culpable, *even guilty!* Lost to honour and to happiness, still will he pray for her, and die her faithful, though wretched.

"DUNCAN."

"P. S. The twenty guineas you advanced for my journey have been the means

of preserving my miserable existence. You shall hear from me again when I am more collected, and in a situation less critical. I implore from you a regard and tenderness for your sister. May the Almighty fill your heart with compassion for her!"

Philip suffered my agony to be relieved by a flood of tears, without interruption, but not without sympathy. He was visibly moved by my condition. At length, taking my hand, he said, "I do not know, my dear Harriet, whether I am acting right by thus indulging your wishes at the hazard of distressing you; but if I could hope this painful remedy might, in the end, prove efficacious, by convincing your understanding and your principles of the folly, as well as the sin, of ruining your health by regrets which you ought not to indulge for so worthless an object, I would willingly satisfy your curiosity by detailing every circumstance of this unhappy affair; being

persuaded that you will no longer judge me too severe in my opinion of this young man, nor scruple to think yourself bound to believe that he ought no longer to engage your thoughts, or to have a place in your heart." "Proceed," said I, "let me be convinced that there is not on earth a hope for me!" "This language is that of a girl," replied he gravely, "my sister will be taught by experience to think it so, and the time, I trust, is not remote, when she will bless heaven for the desertion of a man whom she now deplores, and she will consider his *flight* as a blessing, when contrasted with all the consequences which would and must have followed his remaining in this country."

"Long before your excursion to T—h," continued my brother, "I suspected Duncan's conduct, and also somewhat of your unhappy partiality in his favour. I consequently observed *him* more narrowly, not *you*, my Harriet; for I, with all your friends, believed you too circum-

speck and prudent, to be in danger from a young man in Charles's situation of life, however your fancy might have been allowed to like his person. I was not satisfied with his pursuits, nor his connections; and, above all, with his reserve in respect to them. I was told that he gambled; and that, not with the inconsideration of heedless youth, but with the cool intrepidity of a villain at the gaming-table; but I could never discover his haunts. More than once I saw his purse more amply furnished with gold than I could account for, yet my intelligencer had remarked that he had been of late an unsuccessful player, and I began to believe from his change of conduct about this period, that he had, like most unguarded young men, been drawn in to play by a little good fortune, and then dismissed to his sad experience for want of more money to lose. He was out of spirits, rarely from home, and diligent in the office. I resolved, therefore,

to leave him to his own reflections, and the good fruits of repentance for the errors into which he had been betrayed. Soon after you left town, I happened to be with him in the clerks' office when a person called upon me for the payment of a small bill. A deficiency of silver led me to ask him to lend me a few shillings; he did so; and again I was surprised at seeing many guineas in his possession. The man had no sooner quitted us, than I observed to him, that finding his purse so well lined, I should not reproach myself for want of punctuality in the payment of his quarterly supply, nor wonder at his not having reminded me that it had been due a fortnight. He coloured; and I added, "One would think Duncan, you had either stumbled on a concealed treasure, or found one in your concealed parents." "I am not a spendthrift," replied he haughtily, "and I know I have at least one parent who will never abandon me,

and whose resources are infinite." We were interrupted. Two or three days passed: I was reserved, and he sulky; when he surprised me, by asking my permission to be absent for a week or ten days. I hesitated. "Am I not to be informed whither, and with whom you are going?" asked I coldly. He replied, that he was going to Harwich, where he hoped to hear of those to whom in future he should be responsible for his actions: that, in the mean time, he should receive as a favour and indulgence from me, the permission he had requested. My clerk, Simons, good-naturedly remarked, that Charles had fagged hard during the absence of the other clerk, and he had a right to a jaunt: it would do him service; for he did not look well. Impressed by an idea, that he had heard something of his relations, I gave my consent to an absence of ten days; and at the same time paid him his quarter's arrears of twenty

pounds. He promised to write to me from Harwich; and I left the office to join my friends who had engaged me in a party to Windsor. Two days elapsed before I returned home. I was prepared to find Charles absent: and, whilst at the dining-table, I asked casually, at what time Mr. Duncan had set out on his journey. The servant replied, that he had left the house the same evening with myself. Mr. Simons had supped with him at the inn, and had seen him mount his horse before he left him. "I hope he did not see him tipsy too," answered I, smiling; "but by the hour, I should fear that neither the one nor the other was fit for a journey, either on foot or on horseback." The servant said, that Mr. Duncan did not wait for the morning, it being his intention to ride a stage by moon light. "And how did he manage for his clothes?" asked I. "His trunk was sent by the coach on Monday," replied

the lad. There was something in this account which I did not like; particularly his removing his things, before he knew I should consent to his leaving the house. I expressed my surprise to Simons, who said he was in that plot, for he well knew that I should not be able to refuse the poor fellow, and he had set his heart upon going on horseback: so I advised him," continued he, "to send his portmanteau by the stage at all hazards, and when he had your leave, I carried him to a livery stable to look at a horse which I thought would suit him. It was a fine animal; and the youngster was so well pleased with him, that he hired him of my friend for the journey; and, young man like, said, he would ride him to Rumford before he slept: so we adjourned to a chop-house, where I supped with him, and at ten o'clock I saw him off; although the moon cheated him, for it was raining hard, and I thought he was a

fool to seek a wet coat instead of a good bed." I had perceived in Simons something of that cunning, or to speak more plainly, knavery, which for many months had rendered me uneasy. He was a useful man, however, in the office, and I still employed him. I now thought there appeared a secret intelligence between him and Duncan; I dissembled, notwithstanding, and dropping the subject, applied to the business before me. A man shortly after brought a letter to Simons. It was from Duncan, and the purport of it was, I found, to inform him, that finding the horse unfit for the journey, he had sent him back, requesting him to settle the business with his friend, and to tell him that he had narrowly escaped a broken leg by trusting to his judgment. Simons swore, according to custom, and followed the messenger. I was told that he had paid for the horse's journey to Rumford, and that Duncan would remember travelling

in the dark for some time, having been thrown from a horse too good for him. Judge of my astonishment on receiving a summons on the following morning to appear before the sitting justices. I found it was to be examined relatively to my *clerk, Charles Duncan,* and to meet a person in the office, who had positively sworn to his having been stopped on the Rumford road by Charles Duncan, and robbed of his watch and purse.

I *listened* with horror to the reading of this gentleman's deposition. It was clear and positive in every point that ascertained the criminality of the action, and the identity of the horse which Duncan rode. A crape concealed Duncan's face, and the accuser observed that he appeared to be a young adventurer." Some appearance of lenity in the manners of the gentleman, who was a man in years, induced me to relate as much of Duncan's story as had come to my knowledge; but I pleaded in

vain: a warrant was issued for apprehending him. You may judge, my dear Harriet, of the state of my mind when, on returning home, instead of finding Simons in the office, to whom I was anxious to give the particulars I have related to you, I found a letter from him on his desk, addressed to myself. It was couched in an insolent style. "He had not time to settle accounts with me, but thought his long and faithful services entitled to the consideration of using, for a very special and pressing occasion, the trifle of cash he had in his hands on my account." This was about five-and-twenty pounds. He warns me to try my influence with Duncan's prosecutor, as matters carried to extremity against my sister's husband, would not tend to my credit. Shall I proceed?" added Philip with emotion; "need I describe my sensations! Your marriage, and the wretches with whom you had confederated to blast my happiness and reputation, for a time overcame me. But my sister soon re-

sumed her wonted power in my soul! Providence appears to have seconded my fond hope of rescuing you from the snares that encompassed you. Your youth and credulity here found a compassionating friend, infinitely more able than myself to befriend you. We may rest in the full conviction of never being molested by Duncan or Simons. Keith has finished his career in a gaol, to which a suspicion of aiding in a forgery conducted him. His death was occasioned by a wound in his head, in consequence of his attempt to escape justice, and his wretched wife is at this time a nurse at the Lock-Hospital, for which post she is qualified.

Such are the people, and such the lover to whom you gave up your fame and prospects in the world! Be grateful to heaven, my dear girl, for a deliverance from such connections so little to be expected, and give me the only recompense I ask for the hours of anxiety you have caused me. Let

me see you under my roof, and with my name sustain the character which becomes Harriet Flamall, and promise me never to acknowledge your worthless husband."

Oppressed by my brother's kindness, and confounded by his relation of facts, as I conceived, in which Duncan was so dreadfully implicated, I eagerly consented to preserve, for his sake, the fatal secret of my marriage, and to live for his comfort and service. He was satisfied, and left me to compose my spirits.

From this time it seemed to be tacitly agreed between us, not to name Charles Duncan, and I exerted my spirits now to a cheerfulness, which, although assumed, contented my brother; but, alas! what had I gained! The art of concealment, and the secret of hoarding up my sorrows for my private hours! My faded form was still attractive, and my brother one day complimented me on having, by "*sweet pensiveness and winning modesty*," captivated a lover worth my notice, mentioning

at this same time the gentleman's large fortune, independence, and hopes of gaining my favour. I with firmness assured my brother, that, in relinquishing the name and character of a married woman, it was my intention to have ever before me the vows I had plighted in the face of my Maker, and that as Mr. Duncan's wife I would live and die. He endeavoured to laugh me out of this "scrupulous folly," as he called it. "Urge me not," replied I, bursting into tears, "lest I offend you by saying more. I would forego pomp and riches, this world's favour, and the accommodations necessary to my existence, for the chance of seeing him what he once was. I would traverse the globe with him; I would share in his misery, and partake in his toils without a murmur, could I find him. With these sentiments to support me in my duty, I shall at once say to any man who importunes me with offers of marriage, that I am *Charles Dun-*

can't wife." My brother was displeased. He called me an "infatuated woman, a romantic fool," with other epithets, which I shall omit. I did not resent this harshness, and a year passed without the subject of a lover being named, or any appearing to put my constancy to the test. At this period I was surprised by seeing Philip enter the little closet in which I usually passed my vacant time. My Charles had augmented its attractions by decorating it with his drawings, and enlarging the number of the books. I instantly perceived that my brother had an impressive manner. He sat down beside me, tenderly chid me for my preference of this closet, and added, that he was afraid I should want fortitude to meet the intelligence he came to communicate in a spot so devoted to the purpose of nourishing unavailing grief. I trembled, and would have spoke—But ——

END OF VOL. III.

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey.

LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. HUNTER,

OF NORWICH,

AUTHOR OF LETITIA; THE UNEXPECTED LEGACY; THE HISTORY OF THE GRUBTHORPE FAMILY; PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS, &c.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W. EARLE AND J. W. HUCKLEBRIDGE;

AND SOLD BY W. EARLE, NO. 47, ALBEMARLE STREET; GEORGE ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER ROW; B. CROSBY AND CO. STATIONERS' COURT; THO. OSTELL, AVE MARIA LANE; AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1806.

S. Rousseau, Printer,
Wood Street, Spa Fields.

LADY MACLAIRN,

THE

VICTIM OF VILLANY.

CHAP. I.

— I WILL not attempt to de-
nbe my agitations!—" In order to re-
ve these emotions," continued he, " I
ll ease your suspence. I have seen a
rson who has brought me intelligence of
ucan. A stranger was introduced to
, at a coffee house last night, as want-
to know and speak to me. He an-
nced himself as the super-cargo of a
tch ship, now in the Thames, and
d, that he was charged with a commis-
n for me, by a gentleman whom he had

known at Surinam. I instantly ordered a private room, and he informed me, that he had first seen Duncan at Amsterdam; had there learned enough of his story to pity him; and that he made the voyage to Surinam with him. "His unfortunate condition and deep dejection, during our passage," added this man, "more and more interested my feelings, for one whose education and manners had promised a very different career. I was happily disposed to befriend him; and as, fortunately, I had the means of so doing, for I recommended him to a merchant there, who received him into his counting house. But the fever of the climate seized him before he had been a fortnight on shore. He saw his danger, and had, as it appears, been preparing for it. He gave into my hands the picture of a young lady, which he wore in his bosom, with a parcel, in which he informed me was contained some letters of the lady's, with one for you. He con-

jured me to deliver these to you in person, knowing that our ship was bound to this port on her return. I promised to observe his instructions, and I have only further to add, Sir, that knowing, as I do, the love he cherished for the lady, whom he blessed with his last breath, I think it right to hint to you some precautions in acquainting her with my poor friend's death." "You may suppose I satisfied him on this point," continued my brother, and I endeavoured to sift out of him, whether he knew the whole of Duncan's adventures and secrets. "It was an unhappy business," observed I, "that obliged this unfortunate young man to quit England and his friends, who were able and not indisposed to serve him, had he not been too precipitate: his flight was nearly the death of the young woman in question. You surprise me, by telling me that his attachment for her continued. Did he often speak of her?" "Never,"

replied he, "Nor do I even know her name or address. When, in nearly his last hour, he gave me her picture from his bosom, and said, Mr. Flamall knows for whom it is destined. He will take care to tell the unfortunate injured object of my love, that Charles Duncan has expiated all his errors, by *dying*, and leaving her *free*.—I said, with seriousness, that the most fatal of Duncan's errors had been that of not knowing his best friend; a mistake, however, which had not been shared by the young lady, whose heart he had gained; for, that she still looked up to me for friendship and consolation. Our conversation finished by settling our next meeting for this morning. I have just left him, satisfied, as I believe, that Duncan had in me a friend as generous as himself. There is your picture and this packet of your letters, with one for me, which I have just received from the gentleman. I will leave it for your perusal

when you are able." He quitted me, unable to witness my distress. My Duncan's letter I shall copy.

LETTER LIV.

Charles Duncan to Mr. Flamall.

Surinam, &c.

"BEFORE this reaches your hand I shall be numbered with those in the grave, and appear before that awful Tribunal, at which mercy has her everlasting post. There, and there only, does Charles Duncan expect to find justice; for then alone, will his errors be weighed with his difficulties. Inclosed is my will, in which I have left to *Harriet Duncan, my lawful wife,* the whole and entire property bequeathed to me by Margaret Duncan, my supposed mother, and the only friend I ever knew. I have charged this, my pro-

perty, with the payment of one hundred and fifty pounds to Mynheer Adrian Vandergucht, my last benefactor. This sum has been partly advanced for my necessities; he will, with this, produce my acknowledgment for the receipt of one hundred pounds. I bequeath to him *fifty*, as a debt of gratitude for kindnesses which none can fully repay but his Maker; and to his blessing and mercy do I fervently recommend him."

"From what Mrs. Duncan repeatedly declared to me, and also from your conversations with me, on the subject of my little fortune, I conclude that my wife will receive three thousand pounds as her future provision. It may be, this pittance will be shared by my child. Let it be your care, Sir, faithfully to discharge a trust, for the due performance of which, you will one day be called to a strict account by a Being more to be dreaded than,

"CHARLES DUNCAN."

LETTER LV.

MY letter from my unfortunate Charles contained these words:

"Forget, my beloved wife, that Charles Duncan ever had existence, or that, in the miserable course of that existence, he has involved yours in his misery, blasted the hopes of your youth, and planted daggers in your faithful bosom. Forget, if thou canst forget, when pressing to thy maternal bosom, the fruit of thy ill-fated union, the wandering, wretched father of thy babe: or with pity and forgiveness think of him, as one at *rest*; rescued from ignominy: concealed from the cruel mockery of scorn; welcoming, at this moment, the approach of his deliverer; and looking forwards with humble hope to an eternity, in which he will be recompensed for the trials of

his mortal state, and pardoned for those mistakes, into which his youth and frailty betrayed him. I enclose the copy of my will, with some of your dear letters: with these you will receive your picture, but I cannot spare it from my bosom, whilst my trembling hand is able to raise it to my lips, or do more than sign the name of thy repentant, yet faithful,

"CHARLES DUNCAN."

A time was allowed me for my sorrow, and recovery fro- .a fever of much danger; but which was, I believe, of use to my general health; for I certainly was less liable to illness, after this crisis. I experienced something of those sentiments, which the dying Duncan had suggested. I rejoiced that he was at peace; and considered my fate as ascertained. I could not know more of grief, than I had experienced; and in a submission, which necessity, and, I hope also, religion enforced, I settled into a calm

and resigned frame of mind. My extreme bodily weakness favoured for a time this more placid condition of my spirits; and my rec very promised to my tender and assiduous brother, a renewal of his comforts. He soon mentioned Mr. Duncan's donation. He told me, "that knowing, as I did, that both Keith and his wife were dead; he thought it was much the most prudent measure to let the property remain on the stock books, as it had done from the time of Mrs. Duncan's committing her money and her reputed son to his trust, till such time, as he should become of age. His quitting England within three or four months of his being so," continued my brother, "prevented any settlement or transfer of the stock, but he was mistaken in his opinion of his fortune; for it amounts to no more than two thousand pounds." I answered with sincerity that I regarded it, whatever it might be, as a common fund; and should leave to him the dispo-

sal of it as most useful to our common comfort; and being persuaded that I should not live long, I thought it could not be better than as it was. He laughed at my prophetic fears, assuring me that the physician had told him I stood a better chance of being well than when at Kensington; and he left me with a cheerfulness, which soothed me. His attentions did not slacken. He saw with satisfaction my returning activity, and frequently observed, that I was never more beautiful. By degrees he prevailed on my reluctance to visit, and receive his friends; and I as clearly discovered, that my brother wished to see me married, as I manifested a repugnance to the very idea of exchanging my condition for any other. I thus attained my twenty-third year. From this period, the calmness of my mind was disturbed, by the change I perceived in my brother's modes of life. With anguish of soul I discovered, that he

was tired of having a sister without ambition, and a beauty, as she was called, on his hands, who was deaf to flattery, and who scorned infamy, however decorated. I was stiled "a romantic idiot," "a cold and unempassioned statue, proud of a form that was daily becoming useless." I became resolute; and told him, that with my form I would endeavour to gain honest bread. My spirit silenced him. He begged my pardon, and pleaded his conviction, that it would be in my power to marry the libertine, whom he had conditioned with on easy terms, though not less profitable to his views. His fears, his regrets at seeing me waste my youth in unavailing sorrow; his belief, that my lover would marry me at the death of an old grandfather; his wishes to do so *secretly*, were placed before me. I relented, though without yielding to his dishonourable views, and all was again peace between us. But I no longer considered

Philip Flamall, as the guardian of a sister's honour. Under this conviction I soon after saw Mr. Flint, for the first time. He came to the house, as it appeared, on business; and finding Philip absent, seemed desirous of waiting for his expected return; he was accordingly conducted to me, as a client of too much consequence to remain unnoticed in the office. His age and respectable appearance, induced me to shew him every mark of respect. I recollected my father's opinion of Mr. Flint and his family; and I tried to please him by my attentions. My guest contentedly maintained his post 'till my brother returned at the dining hour; fortunately we were alone that day; and Mr. Flint, who accepted at once of the invitation, found only a table at which economy presided; I retired as soon as my office was finished; but I was told that he meant to breakfast with my brother the next morning. Unconsciously I endeavoured to secure to

Philip this wealthy client; and as it will appear, I succeeded.

Some days after, my brother with much seriousness informed me, that my modest and composed deportment had pleased Mr. Flint. "He has not only made his proposals to me of jointuring you in four hundred pounds *per annum*," added he, "but he has also, on hearing the precise state of my fortune, engaged to befriend me, by lending me a sum of money which may turn to good account. He knew my father, and he is no stranger to the difficulties in which he left me involved."—I attempted to speak—"Hear me to the end," pursued he, "before you condemn a brother to a goal. This man's age, his retired habits of life, and his fair character in the world for his uprightness, renders him more an object of veneration than of love. You may recompense him for the protection of the *parent*, by the kind of-

fices of the *daughter*, whilst, by the union he solicits, you are securing to yourself an honourable name and independence, and, saving me from ruin; for I tell you plainly, that I am already in a state of insolvency, in regard to credit. I will have you to consider of the answer you will commission me to give Mr. Flint." "It is not necessary to deliberate," replied I weeping bitterly. "The knowledge of my real situation will at once convince Mr. Flint, that I am not a suitable companion for his children, nor a becoming choice for him, and without adverting to the folly, which has led him to think of marriage, it will be enough that he knows, that I *am Duncan's widow*."

Never shall I forget my brother's fury! "Be a fool to the last!" cried he, "See me a beggar! blast my character with your own! sink me to a level with your highway-robber! But know," added he trem-

bling, "that I can be as desperate as your Duncan. I will not be an outlaw for one urse! Can you be so weak as to think y man will marry you, under the name f Duncan? What has this miscreant to o with the present question? He is dead, witnesses of your *accursed* marriage are ead. You have persisted in bearing your *name*, and the character of an unmar- ed woman. Oh Harriet! let me plead your youth, your helpless condition of rtune; for your innocence, and for a rother who loves you! Marry this wor- y man: and let me see you protected om the dangers of the world!" I was bdued. I forsook the path of rectitude, nd, as *Harriet Flamall*, married Mr. Flint, ho was three times my age.

CHAP. II.

WE quitted London a few days after the ceremony was performed, and I now had leisure to repent of my weakness and timidity. My introduction to my husband's family was humiliating and painful to the last degree of suffering sensibility. I was not only an *intruder*, but I was an usurper of the rights I claimed; and I felt that, in my assumed title of *Mrs. Flint* was contained a reproach, which covered me with confusion every time I heard it pronounced. My only consolation sprang from the resolution of devoting my life to the man, whom I had thus deceived. He was fond of me, and I studied incessantly to make him contented with his wife. I foolishly began to think that

hould contribute to the slender stock of mestic comfort which I found at Fare-ld Hall. Mr. Percival Flint, and his iable sister Mary appeared to treat me one destined to enlarge their, and their her's happiness: even Miss Flint seem-reconcilied to the young *mother-in-law*, o had, in no instance abridged her in authority. I was fond of flowers, and dy began to enjoy the amusement of garden. Mr. Percival one morning ered my dressing room, where Lucretia myself were at our needle-work, my band having taken his darling Mary h him in his airing; his hands were led with some rare and beautiful plants, d I found that this was a tribute to my culiar taste. My thanks followed, and rcival withdrew, in order to see the plants operly disposed of. "You have con-rted," observed Miss Flint with a ma-ious laugh, "our grave and solemn ok-worm into a useful being. What a

thousand pities it is! that Percival had not seen you before his father:" as the business is now managed he must remain the "despairing shepherd;" for I think the public cruelty prohibits the son-in-law from marrying the mother-in-law, who in many cases might console the poor widow. "My countenance marked how little this levity pleased me." "Dear me!" pursued she, "you need not look so offended, or be displeased with so harmless a joke; you cannot help Percival's playing the fool, nor prevent people's thinking, that the father at seventy is not altogether so handsome as the son at twenty-three or four: you might be tempted to acknowledge this truth yourself were it not for this unlucky relationship; you could not in conscience deny that he is much better qualified to suceed *Mr. Duncan*, than *his father*."—I heard no more; for yielding to terror and surprise I fainted, and my successive fits alarmed the family; and, as I

supposed, moved to pity the cruel insulter, who had brought them on me. She was very assiduous and attentive to me during the few days of my convalescence; and with much humility begged my pardon, saying that she had never entertained the slightest suspicion prejudicial to me; but that having heard of a disappointment of a tender kind, which for a time had injured my health and spirits, she frankly confessed that she had attributed my choice of her father to that cause; believing that no woman with my beauty, and at my age, would prefer for an husband a man old enough for her grandfather. "I neither intended to reproach you for that choice, nor to hurt your feelings by naming the gentleman in question," added she. "I simply wished to establish between us a confidence and friendship which I conceived might be useful to us both. I have my secrets, my dear Harriet; and my heart has suffered like your own, the pangs of

unrequited, nay, *abuſed* love." She proceeded to inform me of Mr. Howard's perfidy, who, after having gained her affections, had voluntarily given himself up to the arts of her sister, who with a pretty face, and the years of a child had basely supplanted her in the opinion of a man, whom she well knew was necessary to her happiness; and who had from her very cradle shown the greatest cunning and address in rendering every one subservient to her will; and she warned me at the same time of her absolute power over my husband.

Subdued by conscience, and uncertain of the extent of the information which Miss Flint had gained, with the knowledge of Mr. Duncan's name, I accepted of her apology; and still further tutored by my brother, passively yielded to an authority, with which I was unable to contend. I tamely witnessed the treatment which

Miss Mary received from her enraged implacable sister, and finally saw the ent girl ruined in her father's love. husband was incensed by some letters r. Howard's, which fell into Lucretia's ; these were incautiously preserved e fond girl, and they were certainly as Mr. Howard had done much wisely not to have written. I en- ured to soften my husband's resent- ; and I should have succeeded; for ved his daughter Mary, even, if I may lowed to speak, to a degree of weak- ; and he was wretched because she unhappy. He spoke to my brother the subject, and discovered an inclina- to unity and forgiveness, requesting to employ his influence with Lucretia give up to a sister a man whom she d not win for herself; adding, that not- standing Mr. Howard had so highly nded him, he would pass over every ig for the sake of peace, and to con-

tent poor Mary. My brother instead of executing this commission, sternly warned me to take care of what I was doing. "Were you any thing but what you are," said he, "you would perceive the danger of your interfering with his virago; let her alone: in time you will see her your slave instead of your tyrant. Trust not to the fondness of your husband; you see what she has effected with her father in regard to her sister. Judge of her power by this proof of it, and avoid offending her: you will ruin yourself, and serve no one."

I believe it is not useless to mention here, that on my marriage taking place my brother took his degree as barrister, and quitting his house in Red Lion Square, took apartments in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Whether his former clients forgot him, or he them, I know not; but so it was; he resided almost constantly at the Hall, and became useful to Mr. Flint in return for

the hospitality he found. Confined principally to the care of amusing and nursing my husband, whose health rapidly declined under the perpetual vexations he endured, I could not help perceiving that my influence was sedulously watched; and every time he expressed the regrets he experienced from being prevented seeing his child, I was suspected of having produced those relentings of nature in her favour, and was reproached by Mr. Flamall for my folly in being blind to my own interest; and I was told that I had nothing to do but to attend to my husband. I perfectly understood this language, and I *did attend to my husband*; but it was not to deceive, or insult him. He was too weak to be advised by me; and unhappily feeling at times the state of abject slavery, to which his own weakness had reduced him, he vented his resentments in peevish complaints, and angry reproaches, that I was too passive and indifferent to defend him

against his tormentor; then, weeping like an infant, he would beg me not to leave him, for that I was his only comfort.

One day he mentioned the disposition he had made of his property, adding, that his children would think of him when he was dead, although they had abandoned him whilst living. "As to you, my poor Harriet," said he, "I have taken care to leave you enough for your ambition, though I can never repay you for the loss of your health, which will be destroyed by your attendance on me. You will find, besides your jointure, a legacy of three thousand pounds, with which you may settle yourself comfortably when they send you from hence: this sum is in your brother's hands, and he may perhaps recollect when you shew him the bond, that he is in arrears for the interest ever since your marriage. He was a needy man, my Harriet, when I lent him the money, and I

warn you not to trust him with your affairs when I am gone, although he is your brother." That very evening he was seized with convulsions. I pass over an interval of suffering which was terminated by his death.

I will not attempt to describe my astonishment on hearing the deceased Mr. Flint's will read. Let it suffice that its contents were such as astonished every one. My name only appeared in it, as having been provided for at my marriage; and as it was necessary to specify that the jointure which had so provided for me, was to revert to Miss Flint at my decease, on failure of issue. I retired to my apartment overwhelmed with grief and confusion. Mr. and Mrs. Howard might be said to have haunted my imagination; I had witnessed their distress on hearing this *unjust* will read; they were continually before me; and innocent as I was, I felt my

soul agonised by the internal conviction which pressed upon me, that all was not honourable, yet a suspicion of my brother reached only to another enigma. What was become of the bond? This question was on my lips more than once; but Philip had succeeded in making himself more the object of my dread than confidence. To retire from the Hall; to assert the independence which I had so dearly purchased; to share with the Howards their father's bounty, were the purposes of my mind, and its support. In the mean time I was treated with unusual respect and attention by Miss Flint, who repeatedly assured me, that the object of her father's affections would always have claims on her own; that she could not bear to see me so depressed by an event which was to be expected in the common course of nature; and that if I thought I had not been sufficiently considered for the sacrifices of health and plea-

sure, she was certain that her father's omission resulted from his firm persuasion that we should always share the same abode and domestic comforts. I blushed, and replied, that I had every reason to be contented with Mr. Flint's generosity and affection. "Had the provision allotted me," added I with more spirit, "been only a fourth part of what it is, I should have been satisfied; for I seek only independence." She looked disappointed, and changed the subject of conversation.

My brother paid me a visit the following morning; and having in vain requested me to take an airing, grew angry. "Wherefore is it, Harriet," said he with a petulant air, "that you affect to play the Ephesian Matron with me? It is impossible you can regret the death of a doating, childish old man, worn out by sufferings, at seventy and upwards? To what purpose this seclusion, this dejection,

these perpetual tears? One would imagine you had already been entombed long enough! But there is no remedy for a romantic mind," continued he with more tenderness. "Any other woman but yourself would have resented his want of generosity. You are poorly recompensed, my dear girl, for your watching, and for the loss of your beauty." "I have enough for my wants," answered I, "and much more than I deserved." "I was not of that opinion," replied he, "and soon after your marriage gave Mr. Flint to understand that I thought his widow was but slenderly provided for, unless further considered. He told me that he had thought as I did, and had acted accordingly. He added that you were the only comfort he had in this world; that he had to thank me for the blessing, and that I should find he had not forgotten my kindness. I have reason," continued Philip, "to think that he kept his word, and destroyed the bond

he held against me; for it has not appeared." I concealed my face in the sopha-cushion, otherwise he must have perceived my astonishment. "This consideration on his part," continued he, "has been however repaid on mine, for I have been useful to him in my professional way, and never charged him sixpence." I sighed profoundly—"Come," cried he, assuming a more chearful air, "let us now look forward to more pleasing prospects. You may yet be *mistress here.*"

I was now told of his intrigue with Miss Flint; of his unhappily being a married man; and of the worthlessness of his wife, who exercised over him an empire, in all things save that of bearing his name. In a word, Miss Flint's critical situation was brought forward, and my agency was demanded as the only means of saving her fame, and the infant from the disgrace of an illegitimate birth. I listened to this discourse

with disgust, and even horror; but, suppressing my feelings, I told him with firmness, that I had gone already too far into concealments, not to dicover the danger of the road; that I meant to quit the Hall, and had already formed my plans for my future life. "These," added I, bursting into tears, "will not, nor can be subservient to your, or Miss Flint's views." "You will change your mind," replied he sternly, "when I tell you, that, what you have refused to do from gratitude and affection to a *brother*, may be thought expedient to perform for your own safety. Miss Flint has known the particulars of your first marriage from the day you appeared here as her father's wife. Moreover she insists upon it, that you have no legal proofs of Duncan's death, nor any claim to your jointure, from its having been granted under a name and character to which you had no right. You will do well to reflect on her temper, and on your con-

dition, under a prosecution *for bigamy*. My evidence, in your favour amounts simply to the Dutchman's verbal attestation of being at Duncan's funeral, and his letters and will written at Surinam. These with me are conclusive proofs; but I know not how far they would be so thought in a court at Doctor's Commons; nor with what consequences at the best, your marrying when a widow under your maiden name may be attended."—"My punishment is just," exclaimed I, "I will avow the truth, I will not take Mr. Flint's money. I will go where I may mourn my lost happiness and *die*. I ask you only to provide me an asylum for the moment. I will not be a burden to you."—Tenderness was next tried, my ruin involved his; the fate of a child who though yet unborn, was urged with many tears; Miss Flint's generosity to me, her attachment to him were not omitted. I was conquered. "Do with me what you will,"

said I mournfully, "only remember, Philip, who it was, that spread the toils with which my soul is encompassed; I cannot live to see you miserable." He employed much sophistry to convince me that I was engaged in the performance of a meritorious work, inasmuch as it secured innocence from shame, and saved the reputation of Mr. Flint's daughter: a woman who had respected my secret, and whose gratitude would bind her to me for life.

CHAP. III.

I will pass over the means of deceit and imposition now employed. I became a *nominal mother* to *Philip Flint*, and the measures which had been adopted by removing me to London, in order for my confine-

ment, appeared to have secured Miss Flint's reputation. Thus betrayed by others, I had some palliations to offer to my upbraiding conscience. The innocent being I had adopted as my own, pleaded still more powerfully. I loved him with a parent's love, and I sheltered him from unjust reproach and scorn. In this temper of mind I became acquainted with Sir Murdoch Maclairn. Alas! in the society of truth and honour I was a dissembler! How often have I forgotten, whilst listening to his tale of woe, in which all was faithfulness, that *I* was a *deceiver!* and whilst my heart and tongue spoke his language, that my life had been for months a falsehood, my affections now betrayed me: I loved, and I rashly hazarded the peace and the honour of the man for whom I would have died. I became his wife, and to his noble heart do I appeal: he has found me his *faithful wife.* May I not say yet *more?* If to have emulated Sir Murdoch Mac-

lairn in his virtues; if to have loved him supremely; if to have known no joy in which he has not shared; if to have shared with co rage his sorrows which were aggravated to me; by the bitter conviction that I alone deserved to be wretched; if to have thus acted is to be a wife; then will Sir Murdoch Maclairn pronounce me his faithful, though erring wife. Witness for me, my beloved son. To my Malcolm do I appeal; to my support, my only hope in this world! you have seen your mother's conflicts; you have shared in her sorrows. Witness for me that I have lived for no other purpose, but to soothe, to watch, to sustain the father whom you love and venerate. One incident which occurred in your early life must be mentioned here. You are no stranger, my son, to the difficulties we had to surmount, in consequence of your father's resolution to leave the Hall, and to reside in France. I have frequently lamented before you this

period of my life. We had, however, so far conquered the opposition to our removal; the time was fixed for our journey, and even our trunks were preparing. Miss Flint saw these preparations with unfeigned grief; for let me be just, she knew love, and she loved me. I left your dear father busily engaged in examining some papers, contained in a cabinet which had been recently sent him from Scotland, and with my work bag, sought the dejected Lucretia. She was alone, in the bow parlour, and weeping; I was employed in consoling her by those arguments which had been a thousand times repeated, when Philip, your uncle, entered, and sullenly took up a book without noticing me. In a few minutes after, your father entered the room, and with a placid air said, "I have brought you something to see, and admire;" and placing a small ebony box richly inlaid with silver on the table before us, he succeeded in exciting our curiosity.

"The casket is nothing to its contents," said he, smiling at our admiration of the box, and taking from it a shagreen picture-case which he opened. "What say you to this portrait?" said he shewing us a pretty large miniature of a gentleman in a spanish habit; "did you ever see a more manly, gracious countenance?" We examined it, and to the praise due to the artist, and the noble lineaments he had preserved, was added our admiration of the rich diamonds which encircled it. "It ought to have a companion," observed your father, taking up another shagreen case, similar to the one before us; but it might have been as well if the picture of the lady had never reached my hand; for Harriet may be jealous of its superlative beauty. He added, that the story of the lovers was long and disastrous; and might be the ground work of a tragedy not unlike in many particulars to "the Fatal Marriage." "I remember," continued

he, "that when my father many years since shewed me the two pictures, he briefly mentioned some circumstances, which touched me to the soul. He was the friend intrusted with these portraits, and with the care of seeking out an infant son, who had been conveyed from Madrid when no more than three days old; and who had unaccountably eluded all the enquiries which my father had, at that time, been able to make. "My absence from Scotland, and my father's death with other events," he sighed—"obliterated from my memory this box and the particulars I have mentioned. About a month since, it was sent me, having been deposited by my father previously to his death in the hands of a minister of the Kirk of Scotland. He on his death-bed sent it to me, with many injunctions to be careful of it. Amongst several letters written in Spanish, from which I can only discover the writers to be of high rank, I found also a depo-

sition made by my father, and addressed to myself. He informs me, that having traced, as he believes, the invaluable child of his noble friends, he had sent his mother's picture to the faithful woman who had been the only person privy to his birth, and who passed for his mother. This I was instructed to do, added my father; and the test of the boy's identity, rested on the woman's returning the picture, with the name of her lady annexed to it. She received it from faithful hands; for I was already on that bed of death, from which I am permitted to write this. She said she should write to me from London, having in her turn instructions to follow; and that with the witnesses of her integrity she should present herself before me with her precious charge, and with transports of joy make over to my care a youth worthy of the Duke and Dutchess; she signed herself S. Duncan. Philip advanced to the table; he examined the picture atten-

ely. "Does your romance finish here?" ked he, "So it appears," replied my sband, "otherwise that picture, and the ers would have been reclaimed." "I ould think no one will at present be nd to claim them," observed Mr. Flam- "I fear so also," answered Sir urdoch; "but when I am on the con- ent, I shall lose no opportunity of giv- up my important trust to the family." would be d—d," cried my brother ghing, "if I went a league out of my d on such an errand!" "Perhaps not," nswered my husband coldly; "you may ot think it necessary." He folded up the ortrait, and, replacing it, withdrew. "What pity it is," cried Flamall, as he followed im with his eye, "that Maclairn is not a panish Grandee! His gravity would have ited admirably with their dignity; and is honour with their pride; some people, nd honest ones too, would think the dia- nonds at least a lawful prize in this case;

and without a doubt, they have long been considered as lost. They would pay for your journey, Harriet, or usefully decorate the *poor* Baronet's *lady*." I made no answer, for I was nearly fainting with emotion and surprise; but finding Miss Flint well disposed to reply for me, I left the room, and retreated from the scene of altercation which ensued, and which was but too familiar to my ears. Your father's illness succeeded to this occurrence, my dear Malcolm. I will hasten to inform you, and him of the reasons which led me to give this incident a place in my narrative.

It is now something more than five years since, that I was called upon to feel the full weight of the penalty affixed by eternal justice, to the violation of truth and rectitude of conduct. In the duties before me, the remembrance of the unfortunate Duncan had been softened down into the placid hope of his being at peace.

Miss Flint had apparently forgotten that such a being had ever existed. A more immediate concern engaged her mind, and from her excessive fondness of her son, grew up a dislike to you, and a jealousy of your mother, which harassed me and rendered her unhappy. Several circumstances, which I need not recall to your memory, proved to her, that the slave of Mr. Flamall, and her own sheltered dependent, was not without the animal instinct of defending her offspring; and even in these contests, the name of Duncan never escaped her lips. This generosity was not lost upon me, who had to sustain the cruel and barbarous hints, not unfrequently dropped by my brother, in regard to a subject, too painful to be enlarged upon; and which produced no other effect, than that of making me, more and more, the inmate of your father's department.

I had, as usual, seen my beloved patient quietly tasting that repose which his agitated mind required; and I left him, to take my accustomed walk in the avenue. A radiant moon, with the soft evening breeze, which had succeeded to a sultry day, cheered me, and I sauntered until you met me on your return from your friends at the farm. We enjoyed the scene around us; and, for some time, conversed at our ease, on the seat round the oak, but hearing the turret clock chiming the three quarters after ten, I rose to return to the house; when suddenly, a wretched looking man, sprang from the covert near us, and ran with swiftness down the avenue. You instantly dissipated my alarm, by telling me it was a sick sailor, whom you had met and relieved that afternoon, on your way to Mr. Wilson's. He had, it appeared, been ship-wrecked, and was begging his way to his friends in London. You finished

ur little story, by adding, that you pposed he had strolled into the avenue, d had fallen asleep. We parted for e night, and I thought no more of r mendicant sailor. The following ening I again repaired to the avenue, was about eight o'clock, and again I k my seat at the oak. Again, did I this miserable object slowly advancing ards me; his ghastly countenance ex- ed my compassion, not my fears, and I e to meet him, with some silver in my nd. He stopped, leaning himself against tree; and wiping his face, as though int with hunger, gazed upon me. "Do ot advance," cried I, quickening my pace, honest friend I am coming to give you a ifle." He groaned, dropped a sealed cket, and darted from me with speed.

Terrors too powerful for language as- iled me! I gasped for breath, and, for me minutes, stood motionless, gazing

at the fleet and dreadful spectre; for such he seemed. At the stile he turned; and from its elevation still saw me, he struck his breast and head; then vanished. A sudden conviction, shot through my confounded senses; I seized the parcel; it was addressed to Lady Maclairn, and in the well remembered characters of *Charles Duncan*. I placed it in my bosom; and was, I believe, indebted to the air for the preservation of life; for I did not faint, although unconscious of time. Your cheerful voice, Malcolm, as you approached me singing, rouzed me, and I attempted to rise; but again I sunk on the seat I had quitted, and burst into tears. You saw my emotion, my dear son, and in reply to your enquiries I made the usual answer, for the dejection of my spirits, adding, that I had again seen the vagabond in the avenue, at a distance, and not chusing to advance, had kept near the house, not altogether without fear. "I

met him," returned you, "and told him that he was trespassing, and that he must not be seen in the avenue. He said, he hoped he should be many miles from it in twenty-four hours, meaning to pursue his route before sun-rise the next morning. He begged my pardon; he had been induced to seek the relief his miseries needed, but finding the lady was alarmed had retreated. I commended him for his attention, and rewarded him with some silver." "He has done me no harm," replied I, "for I was not much disposed to ramble, feeling languid before I left the house." I was no sooner arrived there, than I retired to my room; and with agonies, which it is beyond my power to describe, I read as follows,

"*To Lady Maclairn.*"

"THE poor, the outraged, the vilified Charles Duncan lives to proclaim his wrongs! to pour forth his sorrows before

the only being on earth who will pity him! He lives to redeem his honour from the disgrace and eternal infamy, of having deserted the woman, whom in the presence of his Maker, he vowed to cherish and protect. He lives to take vengeance on his oppressors! He lives to behold thee once more! and then death will close his account here! The grave will be his bed of repose! Heaven will, in its own time, explain to him, wherefore he existed; and to what purpose he has suffered!!!

"I am composed, my Harriet. I have seen thee, I have heard thy gentle voice! listened, in breathless silence, to the pure effusions of thy spotless mind; heard my Harriet, my wife, my *all* that Heaven has given me! speak to *her son*, praise his filial duty *to his father*; heard that that parent had been *smitten*, stricken by the hand of adversity! Heard her call him,

"her dear *Maclairn*," her helpless, her unfortunate husband! Was this the language to heal my broken spirit? No: but it was that which has fettered every tumultuous passion of my soul! I would not for worlds speak to you, Harriet; I would not for worlds approach you! No: I would refuse your offered love! What! brand with infamy thy spotless name! Sink the honourable wife, the virtuous mother to be the sharer of my wretched condition! The companion of a reputed robber, a worthless vagabond; of a being who can claim no affinity but to the earth he treads! No; Harriet, thy Duncan is not yet so poor, so abject! Scorned, and sunk as he may be in your eyes, he yet proudly maintains his claims to the recompense of long suffering and patience. This is not Duncan's theatre of glory! But he has before him an inheritance, and a home; and he has only to press forward to attain it.

"The wife of Sir Murdoch Maclairn; the mother of his children; the prop and comfort of his life is in my eyes, encompassed by an host of angels. Shall the wretched Duncan invade the blessings of another? No, Harriet. He has beheld you for the last time. Live and die a suitable inhabitant for a better world! *Live* to be reverenced by your children's children! *Live* to be called the Matron's pride, and your sex's boast. Only think of me, as a man who was once thy love; as one incapable of forgetting you. Think of me as one, who would sooner have been what he has been cruelly believed to be, than have basely left thee to the tortures of doubt and suspense, and abandoned to an insulting world. Think of me only as an unfortunate man, as one whom you *may* pity, as one who will soon be removed: as one whose heart——

"Again I take up my pen. Again the tumult of my senses is calmed. I can now

weep. I can thank God that your brother is absent. I can pray, my Harriet! I can see the God of mercy allaying the storm, and smoothing my passage to himself. *Farewell:* I have only to see, that you are in possession of my justification; and then shall seas again separate us, whilst my soul still fondly clings to thee. Farewell! Farewell!

"CHARLES DUNCAN."

"You have not forgotten the hour of our separation, Harriet! You cannot have obliterated from your memory my agonies, on trusting to the winds and waves my wife, my hopes, my all! You cannot have forgotten my vows of love, of fidelity, of truth. What must have been the artifices, the machinations employed to beguile you of your confidence in Charles Duncan! But have I not before me an evidence of that subtle mischief which man, when lost to all that is manly, can

effect? Was thy innocence a match for villany? Thy weakness an armour against cruelty? What have not been the means employed to ruin *thee* as well as myself! Oh Being of infinite justice! to thee do I look up for a solution of all my doubts! Let me still hold fast my only consolation; my Harriet, my wife stands blameless in thy sight, and in my bosom. She is still cherished as the faithful, but deluded, perhaps fatally deluded, victim of baseness and cruelty.

"Again farewell!"

This letter had evidently been written after my alarm in the avenue by the wretched writer's sudden disappearance. His narrative was detached from it, and bore several dates, as will appear; may heaven in its mercy lend a portion of its never-failing compassion to those to whom the miserable Harriet now consigns it! May they pause from time to time, and

contemplate the *noble ruin* thus exhibited to their view! For Maclairn's justice will acknowledge it to be *such*; and he will applaud the woman, who, although shrinking from the consciousness of guilt, dares to avow her veneration, and love for virtue. She must indeed be sunk, who could erase from her memory a man like *Charles Duncan*; and Maclairn will understand and fret, that the heart would be unworthy of his, which should not have room for suffering and oppressed innocence, and a memory faithful in its tribute of sorrow and sympathy, gratitude and admiration, for a man, who not only loved her, but also her fame, better than himself. Yes: he will acknowledge that his Harriet, even in these tears, which she gives to suffering and departed worth—but let me hasten to he conclusion of a task which duty prescribes, before my sinking spirits faint.

CHAP. IV.

Charles Duncan's Narrative.

London.

I will be calm. Is it fit for a wretch *like me* to flinch at the sight of inanimate objects? To tremble, and faint in a *street*, because once trodden by my feet, when youth and health glowed in my cheek, and hope in my bosom? Is it *for me*, familiar with misery, to droop at the view of that abode in which I once for a moment grasped the fleeting form of happiness, gazed on her image, and fixed her lineaments on my heart, and then I saw her vanish? No: Duncan ought to have a soul braced, an arm nerved for the work before him.

His Maker has not forgotten the work of his hand. He will triumph, *even in this world!* Oh memory, unfold thy tablets! Show to my injured wife the man she loved; the man she has wept as worthless! ——and then!!—

Is it needful for me to recall to my Harriet's recollection, our mutual doubts of Flamall's honour and principles; as these appeared in his conduct to me, they were grounded on his evading every enquiry I made relative to the deceased Mrs. Duncan's effects and papers. But I had still more convincing proofs of his real character than I discovered to his sister. I saw, that in his professional line, he had few clients of respectability, and that he was a rascal. Determined on *my* conduct as soon as I could legally call on him to account for his, I simply declared to you my purpose of quitting his house the day I should come of age; and you concurred in this plan. Is it necessary to remind

you of those tender fears and apprehensions which resulted from our union! Oh, no! you cannot have forgotten them, nor my arguments for your immediately leaving a house, in which you were subjected to perpetual alarms. You will also recollect, that we both believed our liberality to the Keiths had bound them to our interest; particularly Mrs. Keith, who had gratefully acknowledged my gift of Mrs. Duncan's apparel, and the little advantages which her slender purse derived from her being my laundress.

Passing near her house one morning, just before you left London with your friends, the Hatchways, a dray-man so completely bespattered me, that, in order to shun the laughter of the diverted witnesses of this mischance, I took refuge at Mrs. Keith's: knowing that I could there change my linen, &c. During her kind offices about me, I observed, that she had been weeping; and, whilst waiting for my

at to dry, her dejection led me to ask
r what had disturbed her. "Only the
d story," answered she, weeping anew, "I
m weary of my life; my husband was never
od; but of late he is a brute, and beats
e, because I cannot go to market without
oney. God help me, I am too honest
r Patrick!" "He ought to husband his
oney better," replied I, "he is in con-
nt employment with Mr. Flamall I find,
d he is a good copier." "He will never
d that any thing he gains from that
arter will thrive," answered she, colour-
g with resentment; "the good
d proverb is against him. What is
t by the devil's means will go as it
me." "You ought not to blame Mr.
amall," observed I, prolonging my toi-
, "that he cannot teach your husband
take care of the money he earns: Flam-
is not a spendthrift." "He is too cun-
ig for you to understand," replied she,
dding her head significantly, "but he

will soon show the cloven foot; what is to become of you, when your wife wants a cradle for her poor babe? Patrick swears that I shall not take her in: the Lord help you both; there will be such doings, and no Mrs. Duncan to stand by you with her purse!" "I defy Mr. Flamall," answered I, "and will soon let him know that I can protect my wife; in less than four months I shall be master of my dear mother's little provision, and with that, and industry, my Harriet shall have a cradle for our infant." She shook her head despondingly, "Poor soul!" said she; "it is perhaps happy for her that she is removed, she loved you better than many *real* mothers do their children; it would have grieved her to see you set fast so young." "How came you to know this secret?" asked I, without betraying my emotions. "Because I heard Mrs. Duncan say, that she was not your mother," answered she, "when she gave her dying instructions to

your *honest guardian* with the pocket book for you, in case you outlived her: besides this, I could say more if I pleased; but I do not wish to bring Patrick to the gallows, he will find the road without my help! see his tender marks," added she, weeping, and uncovering her bosom. It was bruised. My compassion soothed her; but she became more guarded; and only confessed that I had not been well used, adding, "I have said enough to you, and should my husband know it, he would murder me. But the time may come, when you will be able to take care of me. I have not forgotten the black pocket book, nor the letters on it, studded with silver, nor what is more, the bank notes it contained. I know that *ten hundred make a thousand*, as well as the lawyer. Betty Keith is neither deaf nor blind." In vain did I urge her to be more explicit. "So I will, when I am upon oath," answered she; "but you can do nothing at present,

and you muſt be gone. My husband may return, and he will suspect I have been *prating*, as he calls it, when I do but turn the tongue in my head." I took the hint, and giving her a guinea, left the room. You were on the eve of your little voyage, ill and dejected, and I forbore to add to your inquietude. Your departure followed, and Duncan's fate advanced to the crisis which terminated his hopes and prospects *in this world.* A few days passed. My bosom was relieved of its fears for your safety; you wrote in spirits; and you concurred in your second letter, in my plan of removing you from Y——th to the north; and from thence declaring your marriage to your brother. At this juncture I received an anonymous letter; it was dated from Helvoetsluys, the language English, with foreign idioms. The writer signified that he was deputed by my parents to inform me, that the mystery in which my birth had been involved was removed;

but for many cogent reasons, which should be explained, he was commissioned to meet me at Harwich; that he should perhaps be there as soon as his letter; but at all hazards in a few days, and should wait my arrival at the Ship inn. "Be only anxious," added he, 'to be punctual to this rendezvous. Measures for your future destination in the world will result from this interview. Be on the reserve with those about you, and above all, trust not the man who calls himself your guardian; he has an eye over him which he little suspects, and he will have an account to settle, not with the *obscure* and *friendless Charles Duncan*, but with an arm of power, which shall crush him, as the spoiler of the widow and the orphan."

You will imagine that my whole soul was fixed on accomplishing the journey to Harwich. It so entirely engaged my thoughts, that I spoke of my intention to

Simons, saying I should ask Mr. Flamall for a week or ten days holiday, in order to meet a friend at Harwich. "He will refuse you," replied he, "for he wants you in the office to supply his own absence. He can find leisure for his own jaunts, but he thinks not of us." "I will not be refused," replied I eagerly, "then do as I do in such cases," said he; "Send your trunk off before you, and take a French leave when you can, in order to bring home your portmanteau: there will be no end of his objections!"

I availed myself of Simons's counsel, and sent a small portmanteau to the Harwich coach that evening. On the following morning I civilly requested your brother to spare me ten days or a fortnight, explaining to him my wishes in part, by saying, that I expected to meet a friend at Harwich, and we should probably make a little excursion together. Good God, how delightful were my prospects! for

these were bounded by seeing you and announcing my parents to you! Some questions, for which I was prepared, followed: reluctance gradually yielded. "He thought it but an idle expence; but I had been frugal, and therefore he should not refuse me;" and, opening his desk, he paid me my quarterly stipend of twenty guineas, which had been due nearly a month. He soon after told Simons, that he was going with a party of friends to Windsor, and should not return for a day or two; then carelessly asking me, when and how I intended to journey, he left us; shaking me by the hand, and with a Judas's smile, he bade me "remember that my purse had not the virtue of Fortunatus's." Simons boasted much of a horse which a friend of his let out; and so strongly pointed out to me the advantages of travelling in this mode, that I went with him to the livery stable, in order to see the animal thus recommended. It had

been a fine one; but had been ridden down, and I should have given up my project of riding on horseback but for his persuasions. He was certain the beast would travel well with me, and return better than when he set out; the terms were easy, and to please Simons, I consented to please his friend, the proprietor of the horse. Amongst the various arguments he used was one, which had probably turned the scale. I could run down to Rumford that night; the horse had been at the manger the whole day, and the remainder of the road to Harwich was light work. This project was adopted; but a heavy rain stopped me for some hours; and it was nine o'clock in the evening when I mounted and parted with my officious friend at the livery stable. The clouds were dispersed, and the moon, though not in her zenith, favouring me, I proceeded on gently. The horse was stiff with fatigue, and I found that Si-

mons had "taken me in," to use his own quaint language. I was within half a mile of Woodford, a village on the Epping road, when I was accosted by name, by a man whom I recollected having seen once or twice in your brother's office. He checked the bridle, and civility obliged me to stop. Enquiries after Mr. Flamall's health, were followed by wondering to meet me so late on such a road. "I may wonder in my turn," answered I, for you have more to apprehend from this damp evening than I have. But you will excuse me, I am hastening to Stretham, still some miles from hence. I spurred my horse and bowing, wished him a good night. He shouting after me, "Look to your pistols, young man." I had pistols with me, but I needed them not. I proceeded unmolested in my journey till within a mile of Rumford; when the miserable beast I rode making a trip, fell; and I received a contusion on my knee, that, for a time,

prevented my rising, and totally disabled me from mounting again. With much difficulty I reached an inn at Rumford, leading the horse, and in my wish to find shelter, I became indifferent to accommodations. I took the first house that was open, and found, with civility, a bed, to which I instantly repaired. The next morning I found the injury I had received too serious to allow me to prosecute my journey, without hazard, on Simons's vaunted horse. I therefore sent the beast home, with a note to Simons, mentioning my accident, and the necessity I was under of pursuing my journey in a post chaise, as it was absolutely my purpose to be at Harwich on the Saturday. My hostess, had, in the mean time, with much humanity applied her infallible nostrum to my knee; and, on my quitting her the following day, she generously insisted on my taking some of the ointment with me, assuring me, that by being repeated, it

would relieve not only the tumour, but the pain. In this point, she was however mistaken; and, on reaching the appointed inn at Harwich, I could not stand on my legs. The waiter, who assisted me into the house, asked me, whether my name was Duncan; and being answered in the affirmative, he proceeded to tell me, that a person had called twice, within the hour, to enquire for me. Not doubting but this was my incognito friend, and that he would return to the house, I ordered him to be conducted to me, and dismissed the man for some coffee. During this interval of suspense and curiosity my knee solicited my attention; it was extremely painful, and I had recourse to my Rumford landlady's specific for a bruise. Whilst employed in applying most assuredly what most assuredly augmented the evil, the door of the apartment was suddenly opened; and to my inconceivable surprise Simons hastily entered. "You are come

at last," said he with an oath, "I have been on the rack these two hours." "And *I* for near four and twenty," replied I, interrupting him, and directing his attention to my employment; "but what brings you hither?" He grasped my hand with eagerness, and in a low voice told me, that he came to save my life. I laughed, I believe, for he swore most horridly, and concluded by saying, that he had not time to see me play the fool. "The person," added he, "commissioned by your father to meet you here, is no stranger to me. Let it suffice, I am in his secret. He is, it may be, at this instant dying at Helvoetsluys of a fever, and I am ordered to conduct you there to him; all is prepared; and you must go this instant on board the packet. There is not a moment to lose." I hesitated, for I thought of my Harriet; but he urged me with a vehemence that confounded my deliberations; and concluded by saying, that my

honour, and even my life, depended on my following him. With his help and porter's I was conveyed to the water-side, and there found the boat, in which we reached the packet, then, getting under sail, I threw myself on the bed reserved for me, subdued by the pain in my knee, and soon after was seized with the sea-sickness. I saw no more of my companion that night; and learned that, fearing to share in the common malady, he preferred being on deck. It was with difficulty that I supported myself to the public-house at the Sluys; but overcome, as I was, with pain, I failed not to remark, that Simons spoke the Dutch language fluently. "It is well I can," answered he roughly to my observation, for your friend is not here; we must proceed to Rotterdam; and you must bear up as well as you can; the passage-boat is an easy conveyance for you. This boat was shared by others as well as ourselves; and with an irritation of mind,

as great as my bodily sufferings, we proceeded to Rotterdam; and on reaching the hotel, I fainted. On recovering my senses, which had been suspended for some time, I saw a well-dressed man engaged in giving me succour, and I concluded that this was the person I was to meet. On asking Simons whether he was the dying man I had been led to expect, he answered, that he was a surgeon, and that my knee required some better remedy than I had applied. I submitted to his orders, and was carried to bed. At length Simons was at leisure to satisfy my curiosity. He began the subject himself, by observing with some ill-humour that it was unlucky—I omit the epithets, my Harriet, with which he interlarded even his expressions of kindness, that, what with the indisposition of my friend, and my accident, which he found from the surgeon would unavoidably detain me some days in my bed, he should

be forced to prolong his stay. I have written to Amsterdam," continued he, "where I find the sick man was advised to remain; to-morrow or the next day, we shall have letters." Need, I say, in what manner this interval was filled up by me! I wrote you a circumstantial account of these various events; and the fond wish of making my Harriet easy under a separation so unexpected, imparted to my bosom a portion of those hopes which were necessary for her support as well as mine. This letter I intrusted to the surgeon's care, not chusing to employ Simons. I made him comprehend, that it was of importance to me; and, with a good-natured smile, he satisfied me, that he would faithfully discharge his trust. It was under cover to Mrs. Keith. Too fatally certain is it, that you never saw this letter! In the mean time, my soul was on the rack, from having no intelligence of you. Again and again, I wrote to Mrs. Keith, and to you. I had no letters, and I began to suspect the sur-

geon had given Simons my letters, instead of putting them into the post-office. In the mean time his attention to my accommodations and health had nothing in them to surprize me; for he constantly talked of his being commissioned by the gentleman at Amsterdam, to be careful of his "*precious charge*," and sometimes he translated passages from his letters expressive of the importance of my person, and his anxiety in not being in a state to attend me himself. I was now on crutches, and free from pain; and I was told that it was proper for me to proceed to Amsterdam. I decidedly refused, saying that I was determined to return to England; and he might inform his correspondent of my resolution, it being indispensibly necessary for my peace, to have news from thence. "I will furnish you with a newspaper," said he gravely; "that will, I trust, make you change your mind; but it may not be amiss to prepare you for *news* that will

surprise you more than you are aware." He began his narrative of the highway robbery charged on me, and finished by placing before me the article in the day's paper, which, with a detail of the particulars, included a description of my person, situation, and even the initials of my name, and of the master with whom I served as clerk. You will judge, my Harriet, of the effect which this intelligence produced. I solemnly swore that no power on earth should prevent my immediately appearing and confronting the base and false accuser. "You know best," replied Simons, "the proofs with which you can invalidate this man's positive oath." But I would advise you rather to secure such a condition of fortune, as will of itself, with nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, prove that you are slandered. In a word," continued he, with a serious air, "I have had my instructions from those, who will take care of your honour better

than you are able to do yourself. Your parents are rich and powerful, and, trust me, more than *one* will be called to a strict account for their conduct in regard to you." I was still resolved on my measures; for my wife's deplorable condition solely engaged me. "It is well, Sir," observed he, with a tone of authority, "I shall proceed without you, and even if it be necessary to Cadiz, and inform your noble parents, that you preferred a *gibbet* to them. But you are a simpleton, Duncan," added he, with more kindness, "I know your motive for this headstrong folly. Will your appearance, and the charge which will be brought against you, lessen the distress of the girl you love?" I started. "I know more than you think of that business also," continued he; "and I advise you to write to her, and instantly make your way to your parents. You will then be able to offer her the protection she needs." I burst into tears, and

reproached him with having stopped my letters. He vehemently denied the charge; adding, "that he pitied Miss Flamall, and was better pleased to serve her than to injure her.

Unable to extract more from a man who hourly assumed with me more of *respect* as well as of *authority*, I yielded to his control. I was still lame and helpless; and except the diminished sum with which your brother had furnished me, I had no resources for my premeditated plan. Simons soothed me, by conducting me to the post-office, where I deposited a letter for you, and his orders taken, to forward all letters to our address at Cadiz, to a house of business sufficiently ostensible to gain him attention with the people at the office. We prepared immediately for our departure for Amsterdam, when he entered the apartment with an opened letter in his hand. "I thought how it would be," said he, "your cursed accident," and the de-

lay it has occasioned will oblige me to go the whole voyage with you. Your father's agent is too ill for the voyage; he has sent me bills of "exchange;" he displayed the notes, and urged me to lose no time. He is, I find, in the country; and dangerously ill. However, I am embarked, and will not desert you. At Amsterdam I was again surprised. This *Proteus* spoke the Spanish tongue well, and in his conversation with the captain of a Spanish ship bound for Cadiz, I perceived that he assumed the gravity and stateliness of a Spanish grandee. On the man's leaving us, after having settled the terms for our accommodation, I mentioned my surprise, on finding him so qualified for a traveller. "I lived on the continent some time in my young days," answered he. "I was private secretary to an ambassador, who in his lack of brains, forgot to pay me for the five years use he made of mine; he taught me a lesson however which I wanted," continued he with a malicious grin,

"namely, to live by my own wit; and to regard every man either as a fool or a knave." It required very little judgment, my dear Harriet, to determine the class to which Simons belonged; yet in spite of his habitual vulgarity, and coarse language, I hourly perceived that he had moved in a different sphere, and could at his pleasure assume the gentleman. He spoke of me as a Spaniard by birth, and by the respect he showed me, taught those about me to consider me as of importance; performing the part of my governor; and making no secret of my having been a stranger to my rank, parents, and country, from nearly the hour I was born. These hints were needless, to stimulate a curiosity constantly on the fullest stretch. To my questions I received only one answer: "I am bound to secresy, and it is for *my interest* to be faithful. Have patience, time will discover all to you." Thus goaded on, and convinced of my inability of securing him

in my interest ; having exhausted my own little stock of money, and depending, in a strange country upon Simons for pecuniary assistance, I left Amsterdam without having received letters from you ; and in the anguish of my soul I sought relief from the hope of meeting with protection, and being placed in a situation to succour you ; for I made no doubt of your brother's interference with your wishes to write to me. Our navigation was for a time pleasant. The gentle breezes which filled our sails soon exempted me from sea sickness ; rest restored my knee, and my hours were beguiled by my assiduously studying the Spanish language ; for which, Simons having proposed it for my amusement, I had purchased a few needful books.

At this period, however, one incidental cause of sorrow was added to my oppressive burden. Two or three days after your departure from town, I had began to bathe, trusting to its relieving me from a portion, at least, of that languor which I experi-

enced; and, cautiously guarded in all that related to my Harriet, had taken your picture from my bosom, and placed it in my port-folio with your letters, which I carefully kept locked in a large trunk, with articles that were not of every day's use. I had seen on reaching Helvoetsluys that this trunk made the greatest part of our baggage; and on noticing it to Simons, he replied, that he expected my thanks for his zeal in my service in bringing it, as he supposed it was kept as lumber in my room, and that I should have no objection to a change of linen. To this necessity I had been hitherto a stranger, and the trunk remained corded till I was settled in my cabin on board the Spanish ship. The treasure it contained was too precious to be forgotten. I searched for it in vain. Neither your letters nor your portrait were to be found. I did not conceal my suspicions, nor my distress from Simons, who as usual, with the most horrid

imprecations affirmed that he had not opened the trunk; nor had any other motive in removing it, but that of contributing to my comforts and amusement, knowing that I had some books in it. To contest with Simons was a vain attempt. I was silenced, and bore this trial, to use my master's words like a "whining puppy." Yet in spite of himself I perceived that he had an interest in preserving my health and tranquillity, and that he never ceased to recommend to me patience; hinting continually that I should soon be in a condition to take ample vengeance on those who had injured me, and to protect you, who had been so unjustly dealt with. These conversations with his avowed good will for you, and pity for me had their effect.

We were within thirty or forty leagues of our post when we were boarded by a large, well-armed Algerine corsair, and taken without resistance; for such was

the inferiority of our force, that it was not possible for us to escape. Surprised and confounded by an event for which I was altogether unprepared, my compassion was notwithstanding exerted in comforting my terrified companion. I strove to encourage him by the same hopes which had calmed my own spirits; and with confidence I assured him, that as subjects of Great Britain we should be enlarged at Algiers; and that we had only to apply to the British consul resident there, in order to be protected. In this expectation we were cruelly disappointed, by the measures which the pirate pursued; who from motives we could not fathom, after having treated me with extraordinary lenity, and Simons without rigour, landed us with great circumspection during the night at some distance from the harbour; and to our amazement and consternation we were, with our chests, placed in a covered vehicle not unlike a waggon, and without loss of

time conducted up the country. We were manacled and vigilantly concealed from every eye by those who were charged with us; who still maintained their claims to our gratitude, by offering us no violence or harshness. I had not been much surprised at seeing Simons relpasing into the pusillanimity he had betrayed in the first moments of our capture; but I was astonished to find that, with his grief for himself and the most bitter execrations on his folly, he bemoaned my hard fate in terms which I little expected from him. "Take courage," said I, willing to relieve his sorrow, "you have nothing to reproach yourself with in this misfortune, and I am sorry, that your good intentions and zeal for my service have led you into this difficulty; but we may yet find the means of applying to the consul, or purchasing our freedom. Do not despair." "I must," replied he with a look of horror, "I have been a d——d rascal, and your destruc-

tion, my poor boy. If you were to forgive me, God never will; and this is only the beginning of my punishment." He wept in agonies, and I was alarmed. "I can neither be useful to you, nor yet forgive you," observed I, desisting from my ineffectual attempts to soothe his agitations, "'till I am more in your confidence. Tell me what have you done to injure me, and trust to my principles, which command me to forgive an offending brother." "By G—d," exclaimed he, "this is too much! I cannot bear it, villain as I am! But you shall know all; and you shall see that at least I never intended to harm you, though it is but too true that my business in your concerns was to serve myself."

CHAP. V.

Charles Duncan's Narrative continued.

I Will not, my dear Harriet, attempt to give you, in the language of a reprobate, the confession of one; let it suffice, that I faithfully communicate to you, the information which he, in the course of our three days journey, poured into my appalled ear; and when his recital is cleared from his oaths, it will be as follows: "You may date your ruin," said he, "from the hour you were at Grantham, in your way to London with Mrs. Duncan, your supposed mother." I started. "Let me at once tell you," observed he, "that I know more of your history than you do yourself; therefore do not interrupt me. You met there a very handsome courteous

lady, who took the coach with you from thence; she called herself Mrs. Peachley; she is Flamall's wife, and sister to Keith. You know her kindness in recommending your mother to Keith's lodgings. Your indisposition on the journey was declared the following day. You could not rise, and Mrs. Duncan, with much alarm, recommended you to Mrs. Keith's care, and lamented the necessity which forced her from your bed-side, for an hour or two, having an appointment which could not be delayed. At her return, she found you much worse, and a physician was summoned. For several days and nights this good mother of yours never left you. You were every hour nearer the grave; and overcome by her fatigue and terror, she got the start of you; for she was dead and buried before your eight and twenty days fever had fairly left you. During this time, when you were, for the greater part, more fit for Bedlam, or for your cof-

fin, Mrs. Duncan was kindly visited by Mrs. Peachley, who, having called to see her relations, discovered that she had found a prey worth pursuing; and finding that her brother had inmates not likely to cavil at the price of his lodgings, she redoubled her attentions, by several times calling on Mrs. Duncan, to enquire after you, and, as she said, to see that the Keiths were assiduous in their attendance. Your poor mother, who knew not a being in London; but the person she had met the day of her arrival, and who was out of town, mentioned, with extreme distress, that in an hour of such difficulty, she had the additional misfortune of finding, that her only friend had left London and was gone abroad. This confidence became more enlarged, in proportion as your danger was more imminent. She incessantly lamented the absence of this Mr. Joseph Jago; and in her illness, she consulted Mrs. Peachley, on the means she should

take to secure to you the little property which her death would give you in case you survived her. Mr. Flamall's good offices were employed; and she made her will, which was witnessed by her two doctors. You were left to Mr. Flamall's care, and your money into the bargain, until such time as his trust should be set aside by your natural guardians, who lived abroad; or until you were of age, in case these relations did not appear. Hitherto all went well, but Keith's wife, either from hatred of her sister, or the spirit of contradiction common to her, thought it a good opportunity of acting like an honest woman; she was careful of you during your delirium; and also attentive to your poor mother. Your generosity when you left her house for Mr. Flamall's, confirmed her good dispositions towards you. I had not been without my suspicions, that the cautions which kept me in *the back ground* all this time, were not used without solid rea-

sons. Flamall, however, in the executive trust which had thus devolved on him; brought home with him on the night of the funeral, some papers which belonged to the deceased Mrs. Duncan, in order for their better security as he said, and he then mentioned you and your condition, adding, that he did not think you could survive your mother; and that he had no clue to any of your connexions. He spoke of your little property in the funds; and the suspicion he entertained, that Mrs. Duncan was not your real mother. "Why do you not examine her letters?" asked I. "I have," answered he; "but they are written in Spanish; and I do not wish to have this young man's story published unnecessarily; if he live, he may be able to give an account of himself, and if he die they must be translated." "I am able to do that," replied I; "and it may be prudent to know the ground you tread." Flamall understood the tone with which

this observation was made, and he gave me three or four letters from a pocket book, which he said, the defunct had in her trunk, and which constituted all the papers, that could lead to an explanation of a secret, which she had too long deferred to communicate. I shall only notice to you," continued Simons, "those passages which struck me the most. Two or three of the letters contained little more than most tender expressions of maternal affection; and the most pathetic description of the writer's hopes and fears, as these related to you. One of a later date informed Mrs. Duncan that Jachimo de Castros had been summoned by the Duke to ———, his agency being more important there, than in England; that his services were supplied by the orders he had left with a *tried friend*, Joseph Jago, a merchant in the Minories, to whom she was to apply in every exigency, and who would forward her letters. Another, of a

later and recent date, was still more important, but it was like the oracles of old to me. Joy dictated the broken sentences. Much was said of a picture which heaven in its mercy had placed in Mrs. Duncan's hands. Joseph Jago would supply her with a thousand pounds. "Her *Henrico*" was to be cautiously introduced to a knowledge of a mother, whose miseries were forgotten, in the hopes of clasping her son, her long lost blessing, to her bosom. "Spare no expence for the masters he may yet need," adds the writer, "it must be yet some months before all is ready for his appearance here; when, with an exultation, the thoughts of which transports me to extasy, his mother will be proclaimed innocent, and he, my Margaret, his father's heir." No signature was added to these letters; but it was now my turn to be *cautious*. I gave Mr. Flamall, not the most exact translation of their contents; and he observed, that they

would do you more harm than good; for it was clear you were a bastard; and had lost your best friend, who had happily left you enough for bread, assisted by your industry. I was soon the friend of Keith; from him I only got hints, that quickened my curiosity. His wife was more pliant. She informed me, that Mrs. Duncan had written a long letter to Joseph Jago four days before she died; and had, in her hearing, desired that Mr. Flamall should send it to his house. Her husband was entrusted with it, and the gentleman was told, that his partner had received it, and had promised to forward it without delay. Now, added she, I know this was a lie, for it was in Mr. Flamall's pocket at the time, and this is nothing to what I could say if I chose. "I was, as yet," continued Simons, "only on the threshold;" and I forbore to press my questions. Flamall was *close*; and yet I found he was in cash. Keith had also money; and it

was my business to diminish his stock. This was soon effected ; and one night he said, that he had been a cursed fool ; for he might have made a man of himself had he insisted on his due. I urged him, however, by reminding him, that he ought to have known Flamall and the jade his sister. Yes, replied he, but they are always too cunning for me ; though I know what was in the pocket case ; and so does my wife ; one, of ten, only of the notes, came to my share for all my trouble. I could not get more from him ; but I knew then my next step was to the Minories. Your mother's Joseph Jago was a rich Jew merchant, and I found his house without difficulty. I was received into an office of business, where several clerks were at the desk, and one who appeared to take the lead, civilly asked me my business. My enquiries led to his answers. " Mr. Jago's absence was undetermined ; but any letters or commissions I might

have, would be punctually sent him *to Cadiz* with his own letters." "Could I be favoured with his address?" "Certainly, but he had reason to believe his friend was then at Madrid; however, any letters directed for him to the house of Lachimo de Castros would reach him." He courteously desired one of the young men to write the address, and presenting it to me, I withdrew.

So far all went well for my purpose; and I was doing you no mischief; but I will at once tell you, that I had motives for my conduct, in which you had not the least concern. Flamall had not only kept this whole transaction from me; but had refused to assist me in a difficulty of my own; and it behoved me to have him in my power. Had he known your chances in life, he would not have sworn to be your ruin, when he discovered, that you made love to his sister, nor would he have effected it, but for his wife. Your

marriage was no secret to them; and I saw there was a plot brewing to ruin your poor wife, as well as yourself; for that "she devil" hated her, because she was virtuous. I was consulted by Flamall on this occasion, whose rage was checked by my arguments. Let it be noted by you here also, that he saw as well as I, that you were not a *fool*, nor would be his *tool*. At this juncture I was one day with him in his office, when casually opening a drawer in his private desk for a mislaid paper, I saw a Morocco picture case appear. I took my time, and on examining it, found it not only the representation of the most beautiful woman I ever beheld, but also enriched with costly diamonds. I was at no loss from what quarter it came; nor who had a right to it. My plan was now completed; for I had the means in my hands of saving my own head from the pillory *at least*, and by serving you, should gain friends who would better recompense

services than Flamall had done. It is hard when rogues are not honest to another," added he, "for they have one in that case on whom to depend: let that pass. You had swallowed the bait I had sent you, the anonymous letter answered, and you requested permission to go to Harwich. All that followed you know; but it is for me to inform you, that the honourable gentleman who saluted you on the road to Rumford, was Mr. Peachey, the uncle of Mr. Flamall's wife, who was at that time in his house, which you passed, and moreover, I was in this secret, and what is more, received my fee in gold: little did they suspect, that, villain as I was, I could not, nor would not, have been in this infernal business, had I not been certain of saving you as well as myself. But you were no sooner departed, and the coast clear, than I took the picture, and disposing of the frame for our joint convenience, I secured the angel face, which I will now give you."

You may judge, my Harriet, of the sensations which assailed me, when he produced from its concealment, this evidence of my birth, and irreparable ruin. It was indeed the countenance of an angel which met my eyes! She was in a Spanish habit, the painting exquisitely finished and enamelled. My expressions of grief and despair touched Simons. "I am cursed," said he, grasping my hand, "you recant, you cannot forgive me! but believe me, or not, I wished to serve you. I was fully convinced that I should succeed in tracing these men, whom I have mentioned; and by this means your father and mother. They are noble and rich, the picture frame was finished by a ducal coronet; it grieved me to break it; but it was unavoidable. I could have proved your identity, and given such evidences of Mrs. Duncan's death, and the circumstances which had thrown you into the hands of villains as would have been unanswerable.

but I am taken in my own toils," added he, with vehement and dreadful imprecations; "and not allowed to be honest when I wished to be so." I again soothed him, and by dwelling on my hopes of procuring my liberty, I solemnly engaged to take care of him to the utmost of my power. "I believe you on your word," replied he with more composure. "You have convinced me that virtue is not a convention of interest, nor religion a lie. There was a time, when my conduct disgraced either; but I was young, and had passions to gratify which your creed did not suit. I was gulled by a hypocrite, robbed by rascals, and defrauded of six or eight years labour by the neglect and ingratitude of the man whom I served by my *talents*, as much as *by my hand*. Your compassion may save me, from worse hands than even these," added he wringing my hand. "I am old, but I have yet

a heart; and humanity may make me faithful."

Misery, my Harriet, does not harden the heart. It produced in mine an interest for this unhappy creature's *recovery* and comfort; and insensibly he became my consolation, for, with a fertility of invention, he suggested so many ways of reaching Gibraltar, and from thence the object of my wishes, that hope was renewed. His communications from time to time gratified my curiosity; although the subject of it was diverted to a less interesting concern than you, my beloved wife. Simons spoke of you, in terms of kindness and pity. "Then again," said he, "I was a rascal; for I knew that her worthy father died in good circumstances, though without having secured to her a provision; yet I held my tongue; and was continued in my office with an advanced stipend. Flamall was certain, as he told me, that her beauty would be her fortune, and his

advantage; and with this scheme in his head, she was treated with kindness under his roof, to the great disappointment of his wife, who had hoped to see herself acknowledged as Mrs. Flamall." "And wherefore does he keep his marriage a secret, even from his sister?" asked I. "He has solid reasons," replied he, "for keeping the lady in the back ground; her alliance is not the most honourable. Some business in which she and her uncle were useful to Mr. Flamall, obliged him to purchase her uncle's evidence, and to silence hers as being his wife; but in return Flamall can any day he pleases hang old Peachley." I was now, my Harriet, circumstantially informed of a transaction which I shall spare my pen the task of going over with you. But it opened such a scene of wickedness as to leave no doubts on my mind, that your brother was fully qualified to impose upon your innocence; and my soul sickened in reflecting that

you were in the power of a man, who, to use Simons's words, "wrote more hands than any man in the profession; and with an exactness so unrivalled, that he could impose on the Devil himself."

On the evening of our fourth day's tedious journey we reached the abode of our new master. He was a man of about forty, could speak a few words of English, and as many of Spanish. He examined me with attention. My youth and appearance pleased him, but unfortunately the people who had conducted us from the ship, had received an impression which they gave to him, and poor Simons was judged to be my domestic. You know that his person is not conciliating, and it was in vain that I discovered the interest I took in his fate. We were separated; my master taking me with him the next morning to a house and garden, several leagues from the town, in which he was ruler. Here my philosophy was checked. I was seized by an ardent

fever, and for many days they thought me dying. Nature resisted the attack, I was treated humanely, and till I had strength to crawl into the garden, and to seek the shade, they assiduously carried me to the fountain, which they perceived I liked. But my grief was beyond their kind offices; I had lost my mother's picture, and I understood that my patron had it. He at length condescended to visit me; for I believe he thought me a man above the common sort. My tears and intreaties produced nothing. He replied, that the lady pleased him, "it was pretty," and by Mohammed he would keep the painting. To soften this obduracy he sent me my books and linen; and I was given to understand that I was to teach him English when I was well.

I next implored him to send my friend to me. He evaded my request; and I conceived from the signs made me, that he was removed too far from me to render it

easy to accomplish. The gentleness of my bondage in the mean time kept hope alive; for although I had the habit, and the badge of slavery, I had no cause for complaint. As my strength recruited, I was employed in light labour in the garden, and my mind was engaged by assiduously learning the Moorish language. Again, and again, I pleaded for the society of my friend, but in vain. At length I was told that he was dead; and the first use I made of my more familiar knowledge of the language, gave me the detailed circumstances of his miserable end. His grief and impatience on being separated from me was shown in a manner which the people about him neither understood, nor pitied. He refused food, and they chastised his obstinacy. He became more determined, and he was left to himself and time for the remedy. Nature at length conquered; he asked for food by signs expressive of his wants and submission; and they in-

cautiously placed before him some boiled ice and water, of which he ate and drank so voraciously, that he died in great agonies, a few hours after.

I found in this relation, my Harriet, my last human tie disolved; and I deplored the loss of a man, whom in happier circumstances of fortune, I should, it is probable, have scorned for his vices, and condemned as a being, lost to every virtuous feeling; but isolated as I stood, Simons was a prop, and I could not think of him as a man who had outlived humanity. But to return to my more immediate purpose. My patron, pleased with my rapid progress in his language, now became a pupil for mine, and with much curiosity he would listen to my reading and imperfect translations of the English authors; but he soon relaxed from his ardour, the labour discouraged him, and he contented himself with occasionally conversing with me in his native tongue. My story pro-

duced no compassion, he had long desired to have an Englishman in his house, and as such I should by any application at Algiers have brought him into trouble with the Dey; he therefore chose to believe that I was of Spanish origin. My mother's picture was an evidence of this, for he had seen Spanish ladies, although none so beautiful. Judge of the torments I endured, when in saying this he would produce the picture, and comment on its superlative beauties. Thus passed the first three years of my captivity, and my incessant and defeated projects of escaping to Algiers. At this period my patron removed to a more distant province; and I was further removed from every hope. Two years more were passed in that langour of mind, which the annihilation of hope occasioned. My master discovered, that he had gained no advantage from having an English slave. I was too feeble for labour, and too pensive for his amuse-

ment; and without a scruple of conscience, or a mark of regret, he exchanged me for a fine Arabian horse which pleased him; and with the most unpitying indifference refused to restore to me my mothers's picture, saying, that I had been a costly bargain.

With my new master, my toils were incessant; but to what purpose should I detail these years of misery to my Harriet? Wherefore should I attempt to delineate chaos, in which nothing of my former train of thought appeared, but the remembrance of the wife whom I had left in the power of a demon? It would be a fruitless attempt to give language to feelings, which at times overpowered my reason. But man, my Harriet, is no less incomprehensible, than the power which has endued him with the force to resist suffering. In the days of ease and enjoyment, the principles of his soul lie dormant; he shrinks from the slightest blast, which an-

noys his enervated body and mind; given up to adversity, to hardship, and labour, all his powers exert their energy to preserve an existence, of which he is weary. Like the animals, it was my office to watch and serve; I slept after my allotted toil; and in the morning awoke to the privileges of the man, and the prospects of *the Christian.* How often did I bless my Maker, for the hopes of the Gospel. How often recall to my mind the lessons of my tender and pious Mrs. Duncan! My mind was soothed by the hope that you were *dead*, my Harriet; and I exulted in the thought of meeting with you in a world of bliss. My master, at this period, sold me to another; he was on the eve of a long and fatiguing journey, and he had the wisdom to perceive, that my strength was unequal to the duties it would unavoidably impose. I was, in consequence, sold to another Arabian merchant; but one much more wealthy than the master

I had so laboriously served, during his wandering desultory journeys, in his traffic of buying female slaves. To my unspeakable relief, I found that I was, with others in my master's suite, furnished with a horse for our journey, of which each rider had the care, and my good fortune for once appeared. One of the most valuable of these beautiful animals was suddenly seized with an indisposition, which must, in a few hours, have proved fatal from the means used to preserve his life. My master despaired of his recovery; and I ventured to propose copious bleeding. My advice was taken, and I was the operator; the horse recovered, and my favour was established. Our journey terminated at my master's home, and we became stationary. His only son, a youth of about sixteen, became attached to me, and, for a time, I entertained the romantic hope, of cultivating a mind, not deficient in natural endowments; but the moment

my pupil found that amusement led to application, he lost his relish for Ibrahim's instructions. His father, a quiet indolent man, had, in the first instance of the son's preference of me, formally given me to him, not displeased by the modes of instruction I had adopted; nor was he without hope, that my example and precepts might restrain the impetuosity of his son's temper. I still hope, that I contributed to the amelioration of the soil, though I was unable to sow the seed I wished to see spring up. He exchanged me with perfect indifference for a young female slave; but with generosity he recommended me to my new patron as something more than a common man, adding, that I knew all things. Whether this character, or my reserved, although resigned behaviour, produced the effect, is not a question of any importance here; but it is certain, that he treated me with kindness, and conceived that I should repay him by the price he

had affixed to my talents. He was by birth an American, his traffic had conducted him into many remote regions; and I found in his conversation both improvement and amazement. Time had blunted the keen anguish of my wounded bosom; bondage was familiar to my dejected spirits; I was a non-entity to all, but my Maker; and in contemplating his arms of mercy, I could smile at my chains. In the course of two years I had, with my patron, journied by sea and land, until we at length reached Grand Cairo; where, induced by the profit accruing from my sale, he parted with me to a Turk of some estimation in the eyes of his countrymen, for he was opulent and well protected. He was advanced in years, had a noble countenance, and spoke to me with a dignified and placid courteousness, bidding me look upon him with confidence. I obeyed, and our eyes met. Good God! when I perceived the tremulous signs of humanity,

the sympathetic greeting of his still expressive lineaments, my soul melted within me; I was unable to resist the sweet invitation of pity, and I burst into tears, instead of paying him the exacted homage of a slave to his master. He turned aside, and I saw, yes, my Harriet! I saw the tear roll down his venerable face. Here, for a time, was my harbour of repose. My benefactor and my friend listened to my tale of woe, and whether it arose from the suggestion of an enlightened reason, or from the benevolence of his heart, he neither blamed me for adhering to my religion, nor recommended to me his own. Once, and once only, he said with a smile, "be discreet Ibrahim, and be true to Allah in thy services; and whether thou art a follower of Jesus or of Mohammed, he will acknowledge thee." I bowed in silence, and I gave no offence by being steadfast in my faith in the Gospel.

CHAP. VI.

Charles Duncan's Narrative concluded.

I again return to my story. The recital of my life produced an effect which the good Abdallah had not foreseen. He frequently indulged me in the recapitulation of those circumstances of my disastrous fortune, which no interval of time had been able to erase from my mind. He permitted me, my Harriet, to speak of my wife, of my hopes as a parent; and my wounds bled afresh. To pity and soothings, he added more solid proofs of his regard. "I am old," observed he, "and cannot live long; you are a comfort to me; and the fate of those you deplore is

probably long since decided. I will give you freedom, and the means of returning to your country, on condition you remain here, and close my eyes." I, with gratitude, accepted of those terms; and, some months before he died, he had, in presence of the official magistrate, formally registered my freedom. He had, moreover, the precaution to give me a purse of gold, which he ordered me to secrete, saying, that his death might leave me pennyless, as he could not trust to the generosity of those who might succeed him. I was faithful to my benefactor; and in heaven we shall again be friends!

I met with no impediment after his decease in the steps I took for my farther enlargement, and at length with my little treasure I reached Alexandria, where I found a French vessel ready to sail for Marseilles, in which I embarked as a passenger. My early acquaintance with the mathematics, and my desultory voyages

with my patron, had rendered me no inexpert seaman. Our navigation was tedious, and the captain an ignorant babbler. For amusement, I had recourse to my activity; and, in the exercise on deck, I saw that the vessel was badly manœuvred, and in a crazy condition; keeping us constantly at the pump, and under apprehensions for our safety. Inured to labour, and cheerfully giving my time to the common relief of all, I became a favourite with the sailors, which providentially saved their lives and my own. Within a few leagues of our port we met with rough weather; and a swelling sea succeeded the gale, which was only formidable to a ship in the condition of ours. The leak gained upon us rapidly, and the captain, in despair, gave orders for the longboat to be prepared, and for each man to think of his preservation. The night was dark, and the peril obvious, in an attempt to reach land in the boat. My arguments

prevailed; by incessant toil we kept the vessel floating till day break, when we took to the boat, and saw her sink before we had gone half a furlong. We reached, however, the port, and the *shipwrecked Duncan*, once more saw himself poor and friendless; but I was *free*. I looked at my muscular arms and I smiled; for I was *independent*; and quitting my companions, who were relieved from their necessities by the charity they solicited, I repaired to a house, in order to replenish my strength with bread of my *own*. My slender purse sufficed, however, for my wants. I had enough to buy me the dress of a seaman, and fortunately finding an American ship bound for London, I offered myself as a shipwrecked Englishman, willing to work my passage *home*. Something in my voice and manner betrayed my feelings, when I pronounced the word *home*. The captain had the heart of a man, and I was told, to take my *birth* "on board" that very even-

ing, and that it should be a warm one; for he pitied me. During the voyage my quiet melancholy and some accidental discourses of "*my learning*," to use the worthy captain's word, so augmented the interest his benevolence had excited in my behalf, that, on reaching our port, he asked me what were my intentions respecting my future employment. I replied that my first care would be to seek out a *friend*, who, if found, would determine my fate, and probably place me beyond the reach of penury. "But you may not find him," replied he, viewing with attention emotions which I was unable to check. "Let me advise you to keep where you are, till you can do better. I like you, and will retain you as ship steward; you are a good seaman and an honest capable man; and may be the maker of your own fortune." I rejected this offer, saying, that I knew not whether my private concerns would permit me to leave England so soon as he would.

"Well," replied he, "I will not press you into my service; but I must pay for what you have done. I was on the look-out for a hand to supply one who had left me when we met. You have more than done that fellow's duty, and you are justly entitled to your wages." He placed ten guineas in my hand, and added, that whilst the ship was at her moorings, he thought I might as well make her my "head quarters," as she would give me a bed and board until a better hammock was found; and in order to make this offer sit easy on your mind," continued he, taking my trembling hand, "You may keep a clear reckoning, by being useful to me with your pen, and your sobriety." He instantly left me, and at his return I thanked him, and entered on my office of clerkship.

My approach to England had opened those wounds which time and religion had in part closed; but I mean not to place

before you the condition of a mind torn by the anguish of reflecting on you, and corroded by the feelings of resentment, and the purposes of vengeance, which alternately governed my soul. At the sight of London my spirits forsook me, my heart ceased to beat, and I was conveyed to my bed in a state of insensibility. Would to God! I had found in this respite from misery, my final dismissal from sense and sorrow! But returning recollection only restored me to the contemplation of my wretched state. Forlorn and friendless; cut off from the sweet ties of affinity; blasted in fame; stamped with ignominy, and marked for justice! Deprived of the only comfort, the only hope of my life! my wife, my Harriet! who had been either destroyed in the wreck of my fortune, or lived to despise and to curse me as her undoer—Oh! let me pause!

I now *wore* life away: one purpose ab-

sorbed my every sense of fatigue, every fear for my safety! No traces of the Keiths remained untrod; these ended in disappointments. Another family had established themselves in the square; and even that had changed, in many respects, its former aspect; for I scarcely saw on the doors a name that I could recall to my memory. Yet to this spot was I irresistibly drawn, and for hours together have I paced it. One day, and towards its close, I perceived that I excited the curiosity of the people who passed me; and that one person in particular was observing me from the window of that abode, in which I had tasted of the cup of bliss, in order, as it should seem, to know more acutely that of wretchedness. I instinctively turned down a passage leading into Ormond Street. In passing a small shop, the window of which displayed, with the food of the poor, the humble luxuries of penny pies and tarts, I stopped with others, in

order to appease the wrath of the woman, whose property had been invaded by a child of about ten years old, whom she had detected in stealing a tart. Her fury was subdued by some one who paid for the delinquent's trespass; and the collected persons continued their way with the weeping and terrified girl. From the train of thought which this little incident had produced in my mind, I was recalled to the consideration of the Harridan's face, who wondering probably *at mine*, and my remaining before her door, asked me what I wished for. I instantly recognized the girl, when in former times I had daily passed at her station near the passage I was then in, where sitting by a wheelbarrow, she sold her similar commodities, and exhibited a face, which time could not change; for a claret coloured mark so completely covered one side of it, as to form a half mask; and with this defect she was moreover exceedingly deformed!

Struck by the conviction of her being a person who must have some knowledge of Mr. Flamall's family, I entered the shop, and placing myself on an old chest which half filled it, I asked for some cold meat, she applied herself to cutting and weighing it. "Do not spare it," said I, throwing down half a crown, "I am hungry and faint, having walked from Wapping; and my return thither to night must be provided for. Could you procure me a pint of porter?" "In a moment," answered she with alacrity, calling to a boy opposite, who as instantly supplied the demand. My questions followed; and as the prelude to them, I told her I thought I had seen her many years back, when I was often a visitor in a family, who then resided in Red Lion Square; but that I fancied they were removed, not seeing the name of *Flamall* in the Square. "Very likely, "answered she, "mine is a face not easily forgotten; but I thank God, thirty-

ve years standing at my barrow, have oved it an honest one; and you see e now with a house over my head, hich will, I hope, better shelter me, than any in the Square have done those who ssed me in all their glory and pride." Was Mr. Flamall one of those who lived o fast for his holding the station he was when I knew him?" asked I, "Oh r no," replied she, "there was no fear that, he knew too well how to get oney to be in danger of being poor. e sold his house when he married his ter to a rich old man, and took rooms in incoln's Inn, he was too high to be call- l an attorney, and it has been forsooth *unsellor* Flamall from that time." I ust find him," observed I, "for I have me business with him *as an attorney*. A lation of mine left him to manage her fairs when she died, and I shall expect y little legacy" "I wish you may find ," answered she, "but they say he is a

sharp one, and loves money." It was a shame to marry, as he did, that beautiful young creature his sister, to an old hunks of seventy. "But I suppose the young lady was consulted," observed I. "I suppose so too," answered she, "for, God be praised, they cannot in this country force a poor girl to the altar; but, as I have been told, Miss Flamall was broken-hearted for the loss of a sweetheart, and for a long time thought to be dying, and she did not care what became of her honour; she has been lucky on the whole, for the old man soon left her a widow, and she married a very proper looking gentleman; and is now called my lady. But it is years since I have seen her; and she may, or may not be living; for she went into the North with her first husband, and I have never seen her since; nor should I have known thus much, but from an acquaintance, who lived sometime with her as cook, when she kept her brother's house."

"What was the girl's name?" asked I. "I remember one who lived in the family at the time my aunt died, when I was frequently at the house on the business in question." "Mary Nutt," replied she, without embarrassment; "but she married, and died in child-bed, poor soul!" My enquiries terminated here, my agonies were not to be concealed, and hastily rising, observing that I should be late, I withdrew; the woman loudly calling to me to take my change. It was already dark; and the intelligence I had received had harrowed up every image of despair in my benighted soul. Shall I retrace the horrors of that night, when wandering from street to street, my footsteps conducted me to the river side? I stopped: I summed up the blessings I had lost. I became desperate. Harriet! The moment of perdition was suspended by a watchman's passing me, who roughly asked me what I was about. I replied, that I wanted a boat.

"You will do well to wait till day break," answered he, surveying me with attention, "Come, my poor fellow, let me show you a house where you will be safe." Subdued by the gracious interposition which had saved me, I burst into tears, and thanking the man, I said, I would walk to my ship, naming it and Captain Nelson. "You are a cup too low," observed he, "come, I will share a pot with you; you are an honest man by your looks; but you must not remain here." I complied, and he led the way to a public house which was open. I shared with him the porter he called for; and he returned to his duty, exacting from me a promise, that I would wait for day light. It came, Harriet, and I determined to live, and to take ample vengeance on my destroyer's head. The state of my mind was such, as to admit of no impediments in my projects of revenge. I informed Captain Nelson that I was going into the country, in the hope

of meeting with a person whom it was necessary for me to see. Again he pressed me to continue with him; but finding me determined, he contented himself with again supplying my purse with five guineas, and recommending me in the strongest terms, to the owner of the wharf he used, and who happened to be present. This man engaged to employ me, in case my necessities should oblige me to labour for my bread; and giving me his address, he bade me come to him should my journey not turn out to my expectation. I had no chains to impede my feet; but measuring the distance by land, and my strength, I preferred working down my passage to Newcastle; having learned from the porter at Lincoln's Inn, that Mr. Flamall was at his brother's, Sir Murdoch Maclairn's seat near Durham.

Aware of the impression which sorrow has given to my toil-worn countenance, I have personated here a shipwrecked, and

sick mariner; and pity gave me shelter. Here ends my eventful tale, and here terminates the decree of Heaven, which pronounced that Charles Duncan should have no friend, no comforter, but that Being in whose approbation he should find peace and repose. I have seen you, I have heard your voice! I listened to your accents of melting tenderness and sympathy when you talked of your husband. "He is a man," said you, "of whom it may with truth be said that he has been steeped in affliction, yet, my Malcolm, like his Divine Master, he bows resigned to his cross; he murmurs not—but in his sufferings teaches us patience." And to whom was this said? to your son, to Maclairn's child! No frenzy followed this scene of anguish, but tears, my Harriet, which, like the dew of heaven on the parched earth, allayed the fever of my disturbed brain, and solaced my burning bosom. I forgot myself, I saw only in my Harriet, Mac-

lairn's wife and his son's mother, dignified and matured, by that virtue which had attracted my adoration.

Persevere most excellent of thy sex! fulfil the duties of thy station! forget that I have invaded on your peace by this intrusion; but my eternal safety depended on your believing me *innocent* and *faithful*. A little while, and I shall be in that grave, in which *for years* you have believed me to be. The storm of passion yields to better thoughts. I will never see Flamall if I can help it. Trust to my word, it has never deceived you; and to the God of truth I make my appeal; that in thought, word, and deed, Charles Duncan was worthy of your love, and will die in the blessed hope of meeting your pure spirit in a world of permanent joy and peace.

As soon as I am assured that this packet is in your possession, I shall quit your neighbourhood, and finally leave a country, in which, as for Noah's dove, there

is no resting place for my foot. But should thy gentle nature turn aside from the sorrows at hand, to follow the hapless wanderer anew in his painful course, remember, that,

> "Though in a bare and rugged way
> "Through devious lonely paths I stray,
> "Thy presence shall my pains beguile,
> "The barren wilderness shall smile."

Think not that I misapply these lines; for my God will not refuse the worship of a heart, because still alive to those affections he implanted there as his most precious gift. Farewell! once more I conjure you by the tenderness and compassion which this will awaken in your bosom, to banish all regrets. Thou wast a widow, Harriet, from the hour that Duncan's honour received its deadly wound. Thy vows were absolved from the hour thou wast taught to believe me capable of deserting thee, even to secure my own life. I have no doubts to clear away. Thou wast in

the hands of a *monster*; and heaven has been merciful, in extricating thee from the snares of vice and infamy, which *that monster* had prepared for thee.

Farewell, CHARLES DUNCAN.

P. S. Judge of my resolution! I have heard that Flamall is daily expected at the hall. I have heard him execrated as the tyrant who rules there. I have heard my Harriet pitied! Yet will I forbear. Duncan shall not be his own avenger; for there is a God "to whom vengeance belongeth," and he will not be mocked. I fly from the temptation of infringing his sacred rights. Your peace is the shield which I oppose to my just, my everlasting enmity with *this demon*. Again I promise, that this hand shall not be raised against your brother; for were it, my injuries would give it strength, and justice would guide it. Once more farewell! Think not of the lost Charles. He is only an atom.

Lady Maclairn in continuation.

From the hour that Maclairn's wife has had this evidence of the triumph of villainy over a man, graced and endowed with every requisite to awe it, and to subject its designs by the power of the virtue inherent in his soul, she has been a stranger to peace.

My conscience, lulled to repose by the fond hope of being necessary to your comforts, my dear Maclairn, as being the sharer of your sorrows, and the companion and friend in whose presence you sometimes solaced your woes, and as one whom you ever saw without trouble or disquietude, had ceased to upbraid me for crimes, to which I had been betrayed, by the authority of my brother and my own timidity. Had I, in the first hour, listened to my self-reproaches on discovering that I had been deceived, and that there still existed a witness against me able, in a mo-

ment, to render me the object of your scorn and detestation, I should not have shrunk from an open avowal of the infamy I had incurred; for I felt that the woman who is dishonoured in her own eyes, and condemned by her own conscience, can meet with no encrease to her misery from the contempt of the world. But as I was Malcolm Maclairn's mother and the ostensible guardian of his father's honour and unsullied name, I have been dumb, and have sustained my burden with patience for their sakes.

But the time is not far remote, when Heaven, in compassion to my contrition and sorrows, will release me. You, my beloved Maclairn, will acknowledge that I have been faithful; and Malcolm will honour his mother's grave with a tear, and he will say, "she has expiated her offence by her sufferings, and has proclaimed that she loved the truth, from which she was so fatally led away by a *Flamall*. Let me,

O heaven, depart in this hope! or be, as though I had never lived to those for whom I have lived. Oh spare to them the pang of pronouncing Harriet unworthy of the name of Maclairn!

I will not, my dear Lucy, hazard a single reflexion on this touching narrative, until the full tide of my compassion is somewhat subsided. At present I am disposed to consider that virtue too rigid, which could condemn a culprit like Lady Maclairn; and to say the truth, my heart is too well disposed to admire and to acquit her. You will not, therefore, expect any decision in opinion until you hear from me again. I shall be anxious to hear that this packet reaches you in safety. Believe, that though Lady Maclairn's "dear friend," I am still your

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. Mrs. Allen sends her love. She is convinced that Miss Flint loses ground.

CHAP. VII.

LETTER LVI.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

I Am truly rejoiced, my Lucy, to know that the manuscript is safe in your hands, having had on my spirits a dread of its miscarrying. You know not the comfort you administered to poor Lady Maclairn by your letter of Saturday's post. She suspected, by my lenity, that I was but a poor casuist in matters of conscience; and that I was more solicitous to banish her sorrows, than to probe the cause from which they spring; but since you agree with me in asserting, that it is your decided

opinion, there can be no criminality in a concealment which secures to the innocent peace and security; I find she listens to me with more confidence; and I hope in time to convince her, that to disclose a secret which cannot produce, either directly or indirectly, any beneficial effect to those who must, on the contrary, suffer from such a disclosure, would partake more of folly than wisdom.

In this conclusion I am guided by the best light my understanding offers me: moreover, I cannot help placing in the balance, the whole train of events which have led astray from the paths of rectitude, a mind constituted like Lady Maclairn's; and I am disposed to believe, that she will be exculpated by an unerring Judge, for those deviations to which she has been betrayed, by the treachery and oppression of others, more culpable than herself. Although falsehood is never to be excused, yet the caution of wisdom may surely sug-

gest, without a crime, the reasonableness and utility of suppressing that "*truth* which ought not to be spoken at all times;" the produce which regulates our zeal, and imposes silence, is no violation of truth. These are my arguments with poor Lady Maclairn; I even go farther, Lucy; for I insist, that she has *for years* been practising the most heroic virtues by suffering in silence, to preserve the peace and tranquillity of her husband and son.

But, my dear friend, if such be the penalty annexed to the concealment of error and duplicity by an ingenuous mind, even when that concealment is qualified by the powerful motives of preserving the peace and interest of all around us, what, I ask, must be the horrors of the mind, which covers, with a veil of darkness, the fraud intended to ruin the innocent, to betray the unsuspecting, and to defraud the ignorant? What must be the state and condition of those whose life is a *lie?*

I cannot form a more appalling idea of a state of future punishment, than in the contemplation of the hypocrite's terrors even in this life. What must be the life of a person, whom deceit and treachery have made responsible for his safety to a confederate, as depraved and dishonest as himself; living under the dread of the chance of every moment for open detection; harassed with the conviction that a more immediate interest, or more specious promises, will convert the sharer of his crimes into an informer and accuser, whom he dares not confront? What can equal the pang which must at times pierce his bosom when he recollects, that he enjoys the confidence and favour of his fellow creatures, only because they do not know him for a monster to be shunned! But I must check this train of thought.

Lady Maclairn thanks you for your soothing letter. Her mind is relieved by the participation of its burden. She can

now, to use her own words, live without devouring her griefs, lest they should be seen. Sir Murdoch smiles and tells her, he is his rival with Rachel Cowley. We shall yet be more comfortable I trust.

I enclose for your amusement and *Mamma's perusal*, a letter we received on Monday from Mr. Serge. Well may this poor man apply to himself the words of the son of Sirach!

"The father waketh for the daughter when no man knoweth, and the care for her taketh away sleep when she is young, lest she pass away the flower of her age; and being married, lest she should be hated." I only regret that Mr. Serge did not study the same author, or at least one as wise, for the means to prevent the watchfulness and parental anxiety, so admirably described in the above mentioned words: for had he understood better how to chuse a wife, he might have slept in peace. A woman without understanding

can hardly be called a virtuous woman, and we well know the price of a virtuous woman is far aboye rubies.

Miss Flint goes on deplorably; her sufferings have subdued the baronet, who sees with augmenting admiration the unremitting attentions of his "excellent Harriet." Even Malcolm relents, and this morning most cordially wished his mother to urge her to send for advice to London, thinking her case a chirurgical one.

I am growing somewhat displeased with the winds and waves; but I remember *Canute*, and submit to a power which I cannot control. Mrs. Allen sends her love; she is constantly engaged with her invalid. Miss Flint is not easy without her.

I remain, faithfully your's,

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER LVII.

Jeremiah Serge to Sir Murdoch Maclairn.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Putney, Oct. 27.*

I am certain, if you knew the consolation I have in your counsels and advice, you would rejoice; for it is the command of a master we both wish to serve and obey, that the "strong help the weak." God knows I am weak, and my talents few; you are a chosen servant, to whom many are intrusted; but yet, Sir Murdoch, we are of the "same household," and the children of the same father; and, blessed be God! you do not, like some men, scorn the relationship, because one is appointed to a lower station than another, by that wisdom which will accept the *lowest*, who performs what is required of him. I am

again brought to the trial of my strength by a new sorrow, from which, my good friend, neither my money, nor my wisdom, can altogether shelter me. Yet both shall be tried, as the means of relief; for both have their use, when in the discharge of that duty, which I am bound to perform as a Christian parent. My daughter, Caroline, encourages me to open my heart to you; she says, she will be answerable for the event, for that Sir Murdoch Maclairn is a *man* as well as a *baronet*, and that he will feel as a father the troubles of a father; and she is sure, that you will approve of my conduct; I think also that you will; for I have been governed by her; and surely Heaven, in its mercy, has preserved her life for my good; and has arrested the hand of death, until she was more than ripe for the blessed state prepared for her. Such a child! and yet so wise! so good! I cannot proceed — —

I have taken up my pen again. It is

only five o'clock, and not a soul stirring in the house but myself. So I will try and disburthen my mind a little!—I do not now remember whether I told you, that some few weeks since, Mrs. Tomkins, after passing a day or two with my dear child, during her mother's absence from home, took Lydia to town with her, her dear sister thinking, as she told me, that the poor girl was losing her spirits. I knowing that she thought of every one's comforts, consented to my good friend's wish of showing Lydia some kindness. The very evening they left us, Caroline turned her discourse on Nora, praising the letters she had written to us, and, with her perfect charity, hoping all things. "I do not repent, my good child," said I, "of the kindness I have shown her: I am not the poorer nor the worse man, if I have purchased with seven thousand pounds, the gratitude of one, on whom she depends for the comfort of her life.

Would to God, that I could purchase health for you!" She smiled, and said, "Then indeed would you be in danger of a bankruptcy; for I believe my father would give his last shilling for his children's benefit. But let this pass. My health is not *at present* what troubles me. Promise me, my dear father, that, should Lydia stand in need of your support, you will remember, "That, where much is given, much may *justly* be required;" but that where *nothing* has been *sown*, we cannot reasonably except an harvest to rise." "Make your mind easy in regard to her," replied I, "thinking she had in her thoughts the little favour Lydia stands in with her mother, I pity and love her." "I understand what you mean; and I promise you, I will be her father and her mother too, when occasion serves. She shall not be brow-beaten and neglected as she has been of late." "Alas! my dear father," answered Caroline, "you must promise

ure, or I cannot die in peace. You must promise to forgive another offending child: you must promise"—She threw her arms round me, Sir Murdoch, and weeping, added, "to shelter her from reproach and shame." I turned faint and giddy; and my daughter gave me her salts. Oh! if you could but have heard what she said, you would not wonder at what I have done. In a word, my child was satisfied; and she lives to tell me again, that she was going to a Heavenly Father, from *one* who imitated him in lenity to his offending offspring. There was, in her look, something which poured joy and comfort into my broken heart. I only wish I could go to heaven with her.

"Well, I saw my weak unhappy girl; and Mrs. Tomkins advised me to let her manage; for she was certain the terror of seeing her mother would be fatal to her and the unborn infant. I could not reproach her, Sir Murdoch, indeed, an *afflicted*

man is not an *angry* man: and after all, had not I been deficient in my duty? Has not my indolent temper, and love of peace, been more considered than the good of my family? I have been too passive, Sir Murdoch, too indulgent.

"I found the young spark who had taken Lydia's fancy was William, who was with us at Fairfield Hall, and whom we all liked, as a very sober well behaved young man. His sister, my wife's favourite maid, introduced him to us some time before we went to Bath. She said he was like many foolish young men, tired of being remote from temptation; and that he had gained, with much difficulty, her father's consent to seek a place in London, as a valet, or a butler, being well qualified for both; she was quite unhappy that he should be left to his own guidance till he was fixed in a sober family; seeing he was a very likely young man, and quite a stranger. So my wife, who never is be-

kind hand in good nature, said he might come to Putney, and we were well pleased with him, and engaged him to attend us to Bath. Poor Lydia has been honest with Mrs. Tomkins. The young fellow was not so much in fault as herself: she confessed that she sought him. However, this was not the question with me; we might perhaps have hushed up this business; such things are done, as they say, every day: but what follows? a crime, in my opinion, ten times worse than Lydia's; being, as it were, committed in cool blood; for what can be more dishonest than passing off a deluded girl for a chaste one? and depriving a poor innocent babe of a father, and a name. I could not do such an act of injustice; being convinced that it would be doing what I should not think just in another to do by me.

I consulted our friend counsellor Steadman, however, on this vexatious business; for notwithstanding I have little to be

proud of as one may say, yet it went some how to my heart, that a child of mine should be pointed at by scorn and derision. He is a worthy and a wise man, and agrees with Mr. Tomkins, that the best thing I can do, is to let these young simpletons be married; the girl being half distracted with the fear of losing sight of William; and he being willing to take her, as he told the friend we employed, Mrs. Tomkins's mother, that he would work for her to his life's end, and show his good master that it was not his money he wished for. I find his parents are honest people, though low in the world; they had a farm within six miles of York, but by losses amongst their cattle things went backward, and being in arrears for rent when their lease expired, they lost the farm. William was then about eighteen, had received good learning, and was a sober, steady lad; but a little pride made him discontented; and he did not like to work as a

gardener, in a piece of ground, which his father cultivated in that way, near York, and which, as he says, in excuse for his leaving his parents, could only produce a maintainance for them, and that he was only a burden on the ground. So all was fixed for the marriage, and we thought no time was to be lost.

I am not quite pleased with my wife, Sir Murdoch, although I know she is as harmless as an infant; yet it grieves me to see that she will always be *an infant.* She was absent a whole month from Putney; and whilst Caroline was thus employed, and thus disturbed, she was taking her pleasure with people she knew nothing of, and whom all honest and sober minded persons would shun. During eight days she waited forsooth, for the captain, who could not think it proper *for Mrs. Serge* to travel without an escort, as he calls a puppy. I remembered the time, when much younger, she could travel by

land and by water without such a conundrum in her head. However they arrived here, and the captain, to my great satisfaction, refused to lodge with us, pleading business in town; and intending to be absent only three days from his Nora and his friends.

I shall say nothing of my poor wife's hysterics, when I told her how matters stood with Lydia. She was terribly bad indeed! But, thank God, these fits are not dangerous, as the doctors say; and experience seems to justify them in their opinion; for, I know one of my wife's old friends, who has been subject to them twenty years. No sooner had my poor Lydia got the better of hers on this trying occasion, than she lamented her hard case, saying, with many tears and much anger, that she should never be able to shew her face again amongst fashionable people; and that no one but myself would ever have thought of sinking their family by

such a *dunghill* connexion. I lost my temper, Sir Murdoch, for it frets a man to be always doing for the best, and who is said never to do right. And I very roundly told her, that all the plagues of my life were owing to fashionable people, as she called gamblers and pickpockets; and if, added I, that were all the mischief, I should be tempted to thank William Willet for his good services. You have now, continued I, been a month under a roof which the honest would shun; whilst under *your own*, Mrs. Serge, the prop and stay of my life, is sinking to the grave. You might have learned a lesson of more value than what your fashionable people at Reveland Park have been teaching you. She looked confounded, and wept in silence. No man loves peace more than I do; my heart relented; and I only added, that she knew this was my temper; that, whatever I *thought*, or rather *felt* to be right, that I would *do*; and that the following

morning Lydia would be Mrs. Willet. I kept my word, Sir Murdoch, and last Thursday by means of a licence, I saw the young couple united. I do not know how it was, but they quite softened me by their tears and thanks. Mrs. Tomkins was so good as to accompany them to her mother's; they set out as soon as the ceremony was over, and I returned to Putney to dinner, contented and relieved in my mind. On entering the parlour I found my *fashionable* son-in-law there; he was reading the newspaper, and I asked him, by way of saying something, "what news?" "None," replied he, "of importance; but I understand, Sir, we may expect a curious article to morrow." He smiled, and, as I thought, insolently; adding, "Miss Lydia Serge, second daughter to Jeremiah Serge, Esq. married to William Willet, late butler and gardener at Putney in her father's house, will make a curious paragraph!" "Very likely," an-

swered I gravely; "and the article may farther say, that the marriage ceremony was performed in *St. Martin's Church*, by the minister of the parish, and in the presence of the bride's father. I shall contentedly leave to the public their opinions; some may be found who will perceive nothing wonderful in a marriage between *Serge the taylor's daughter*, and Willet *the farmer's son*." "You are to judge for yourself, Sir," replied he, but I conceive few will think Miss Lydia's character redeemed by this twofold disgrace to herself and family. Upon my honour I pity Mrs. Serge; and I dread the effects of this intelligence on Mrs. Fairly." "Look ye, captain!" answered I, "neither your mode, nor William Willet's, of getting a footing in my family has been such as will make either of you my counsellors or guides. I shall act as I please, do as I please; but as I am a *just man*, be it your case so to conduct yourself, as to make it

pleasant to me to be *your friend*. My children, *except one*, who is too good for this miserable world, have both chosen for themselves. The same lenity has been employed for the one, whom weakness has betrayed to folly, as to the other, whom vanity and presumption rendered ungrateful and disobedient." "I hope, Sir," returned he with a fierce air, "you do not pretend to compare—" "We will do what is better," answered I, ringing the bell, "we will drop the enquiry, and have our dinner." My gentleman was surprised, I believe; by my manner he took the hint, however, and followed me to the dining parlour. Our meal was not a chearful one, and I went to my dear girl the moment the cloth was withdrawn.

I see, Sir Murdoch, how things are turning. My wife is cajoled and flattered by this fellow to such a degree as would surprise you; she fancies he has done her a great favour by running away with her

daughter! Poor soul! it will be well if he does not run away with her simple understanding! However, all these troubles call upon me for diligence in the settling my worldly concerns, as well as those, for another and a *better* state. I have already spoke to counsellor Steadman on this subject. My property is very considerable, and much caution is necessary in the disposal of it, so as to render it a *lasting* benefit to my family. Now, my good Sir Murdoch, I think nothing would give me more comfort in my last hour, I believe it is not far distant, than to know that I had left you, and my dear friend Mr. Malcolm with Mr. Steadman, guardians and trustees for the support of the ignorant and helpless, and a *wall of defence* for the innocents who may spring from my daughter's imprudent marriages. I am led to hope that you will not refuse me this kindness. You shall hear from the counsellor when all is prepared. He has been my right-hand

lately; I am directed by him in all that relates to William's settlement; but Lydia shall have the same allowance as Nora; and we are on the look-out for something for her husband.

God preserve you all in health,

prays your faithful friend,

JEREMIAH SERGE.

P. S. My wife begs to be remembered, she is out of spirits, and fancies the air of Putney unwholesome. My Caroline is a miracle! It is astonishing to think how nature is supported! I am far from being well; you will not wonder at this.

CHAP. VIII.

LETTER LVIII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

IT is with no small satisfaction, my dearest Lucy, that I find my "enthusiasm of mind and ardency of temper," (to avail myself of your gentle terms for a spirit too often governed by the impulse of a heart, which, in its promptitude is apt to take the lead of judgment) have met with your approbation and concurrence, in regard, at least, to the conduct I mean to pursue with Lady Maclairn: to say the truth, Lucy, I could practise no other; for she hourly rises in my *estimation*, and *esteem*

with me is the basis of affection. The relief which she finds in communicating her thoughts to me, has given to her very language a frankness which appears to be her natural character; and in her account of the various occurrences of her life, since she married Sir Murdoch, she omits not even her conjectures, as these arose from the circumstances in which she has been placed. "I long since had proofs," said she this morning, when speaking of the suffering Miss Flint, "that Lucretia was not devoid of feeling. My brother, for reasons of his own, had so contrived it, that she firmly held an opinion which he, it is probable, only *affected* to have. Illegitimate birth he considered as an indelible disgrace on the innocent; and Miss Flint adopted this notion, firmly believing that neither fortune, talents, nor even virtue could screen an unfortunate being, who stood in this predicament, from the reproach and insults of the malicious.

Her affection for her child was unbounded; and I saw with comfort, that I had at least gained her gratitude, by my apostacy from truth. The conduct she maintained with my brother, in the mean time, puzzled me. It was obvious, he was no longer *the favoured lover*; and one day, observing Philip much disturbed from an interview he had with her in the garden at Kensington, I ventured to say to Lucretia, that I was sorry to see Philip unhappy. "I understand you," replied she, "and I will be explicit with you. I shall never be his wife; nor will I be to him what I unfortunately have been. I am a *mother*, Harriet, and I will prove myself one, by remaining what I am, and what I can contrive to be, the guardian of my son. I have no passions to gratify, no desires to control, since I beheld the face of my child; to love and cherish him, and to bless you for your goodness, shall fill up the measure of my *miserable* days."

She burst into tears and left me abruptly. Her sincerity wanted no evidence stronger than her conduct, continued Lady Maclairn. For some time all went well. I was made happy through her mediation, and amongst the delusive hopes, which led me to Farefield Hall as Maclairn's wife, was the flattering one, that, by the influence I had acquired over Lucretia, I might in time reconcile her to Mrs. Howard. Mr. Flamall frustrated these designs. His affections, as a parent, were so artfully, so effectually brought forward, and his conduct was so specious, that Lucretia insensibly gave him a confidence, which as gradually subjected her to his will and pleasure as myself; and she observed, that nature had yet preserved one strong hold in Flamall's bosom; for that he loved his child; and that would prove to her a source of future comfort; for that no man was more capable of the office of preceptor. Even I assented to this opinion, Miss

wley. as it related to his talents; and I
s still the dupe of that affection, which
ure had interwoven with my frame for
y *brother*. He became more serious and
erved from the hour of Philip's birth,
d in the regularity of his conduct, and
e instances I had of his growing parsi-
ny, I scrupled not to think that he was
hanged man in many respects, although
l unsubdued in his love of power. As
ilip became of an age to receive his les-
ns, his visits at the hall might be called
esidence; but you know already how
le these visits were productive of com-
rt to me, and, I may likewise add, of
mfort to Miss Flint; for my brother
as a rigid disciplinarian; and had not
e child's temper been one of the most
cile and sweet, he would have been mi-
rable; for my brother, guided by his
quaintance with vice, understood not
at the path to virtue is pleasant, and to
perverted feet, and a pure heart, has al-

allurements far superior to any that his lectures and vigilance could furnish.

You may judge of the difficulties I had to encounter in this period of my life; and the condition to which I was reduced by *a brother's* reminding me, from time to time, that it was best for me to be "*prudent*." There was little need of a conscience like mine to draw the inference; his tone and manner were sufficient, and he repeatedly roused Lucretia to stand forth as my champion, on a ground which had made me a coward, and the slave of the wretch who had led me into the crooked path. "Her conduct was, at least, uniformly generous on this point," continued Lady Maclairn; "she never, directly nor indirectly, mentioned Duncan, nor did I, till very lately, know to what extent her knowledge went of this unhappy affair. I breathed like one freed from death, when I found that Mr. Flamall had determined to leave England with Philip. From the

e I had the unfortunate Mr. Duncan's
ative before me, my soul abhorred the
it of my brother; and I so entirely se-
ded myself in my husband's apartment,
we did not meet twice in a week, and
reserve and coldness when we did, went
beyond mine. Again, my dear Miss
ley, truth obliges me to give a good
rt of Miss Flint. In proportion as my
its flagged she redoubled her attention
y wants, and her purse was ever open
e. I believe, that my brother's rea-
for going to Jamaica, originally sprung
a serious quarrel with Lucretia. The
h of his wicked wife left him free to
y, and he was very pressing on that
ect with Miss Flint. Lucretia had
secrets as well as myself; but accident
me within reach of hearing her say,
ever; urge me no further; for by all
is sacred, if you do, Percival shall
w all." I retreated, fearing to be dis-
red; and, from that time, his voyage

was mentioned as a decided matter. After my brother's departure, Lucretia fatigued me with her importunities, to draw me from my husband's room. "I should have a servant to watch him; and one I could rely on, although it cost her an hundred pounds *per annum*." I was firm, and she submitted. Left to herself, she thought of her niece, and I was consulted on the expediency of her inviting this poor girl to live with her; I was distressed for a reply; knowing the bitter resentment which she had nourished even to the name of Howard; and her hatred to those who had sheltered this unfortunate and excellent couple. I evaded the question as well as I could, contenting myself with observing, that I had always thought it an act of duty on her part to take care of her niece. "I am willing to do so;" answered she colouring; "but I must first know what she is good for; and whether the people with whom she lives have not taught her to

ve I am a monster." I saw the rising
m, and timidly shrunk from it, saying,
I could not give her my advice, with-
incurring the censure of being swayed
a sordid consideration for my reputed
." But you know," added I, " that
can provide for both these young peo-
; and you must determine their re-
tive claims." Poor Mary soon after
hanged her abode of peace, for *this*,
the event has confirmed my fears.
: gentle and timid Mary neither gained
its here, nor strove to amuse her aunt's.
had but one path, it was to submit in
ice to her aunt's temper, and to antici-
: her commands by her diligence. She
n perceived the fatal habit which Lu-
ia indulged; and this produced terror
disgust in her innocent mind, which, as
i will believe, did not tend to conciliate
to her aunt's hardships. I did all that
ould do, to soften the one and encou-
e the other; but my interference was

resented, and I was reproached, as being allied to her enemies, and blinded by Malcolm to favour the Heartleys.

I was tempted, Lucy, to hazard some questions, with a direct reference to Sir Murdoch's suspicion of having been poisoned; but a moment's reflection checked my curiosity; and I diverted her attention from perceiving my embarassment, by asking her, whether she knew what was become of the gentleman's portrait, and the papers, which so obviously appeared to have belonged to Mr. Duncan's story? She unaffectedly answered, that, Sir Murdoch had, when in London to meet me, consigned them into the hands of the Spanish minister, then resident there; and in the interview," added she, "he learned that this nobleman was not totally a stranger to the fate of Duncan's parents; they were dead; and a distant branch of the family was in possession of the title and immense estate; but there was a sister of the Duke

still living, who was abbess of a convent; and to her he engaged to deliver these melancholy memorials of her still adored brother. Can you wonder, Miss Cowley," continued she with emotion, "that I wish for death! think of my meditations, when darkness and repose conceal me from all eyes but those of a merciful Being, who witnesses my agonies. Such has been the ruin effected by a wretch I dare not curse! He is the child of my parents; the ties of blood still flow around my heart; and I implore Heaven's sparing mercy for him, whilst my soul sickens at the thought of the injuries his hands have wrought, and which no time nor repentance can remedy. Think of his dreadful account with outraged humanity, violated truth, and every law of justice! I endeavour to hope that Charles has found his peaceful grave. I dream of him; and this frame of mind lays me open to superstition: my imagination presents him, as exultingly hover-

ing over me on angel's wings, smiling with ineffable complacency, and beckoning me to follow him. I try to obey him, and awake trembling. Such are the visions of my sleeping hours! You need not be told the meditations of my waking ones. One single principle of action has counteracted the fatal effects of these perturbations. I love my husband, my dear Miss Cowley, with an affection exclusively his; and I wish to live, whilst that life is useful to him. I am prepared for the event of being hateful to his eyes. God will have compassion on me!"

My tears composed her; and my arguments were listened to. She promised me to be all I wished; and I broke up the conversation by proposing a walk in the avenue. Her husband joined us there, and I told him I had been chiding my mother. He smiled tenderly, and placed himself between us, observing, that he would keep the peace. "You will not succeed,"

replied I with assumed gaiety; "nor will I accept of you for an ally; you are too much like your wife; but I have blustered her already into obedience to my will; and she had promised to be good, and to walk with me every day the sun shines, instead of sitting in Miss Flint's room to hear of pains which she cannot alleviate. He thanked her, and blessed your

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER LIX.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

I am glad you agree with me in thinking it proper that our dear Mary should know the doctor's opinion of her aunt's precarious life. She has consented with

great reluctance to see Doctor Tufton; he confirms our fears, and has made no change in her medicines. She told Douglass that she hoped he was satisfied by her compliance with his wishes, and added, "Do not think I am to be deceived; I have done with medicines and doctors." "I told her that in that case I should think myself dismissed from her presence as well as favour," said the doctor. "She answered that the visits of a friend would still be useful and acceptable;" but added she dejectedly, "your prescriptions may not be more infallible for a sick mind, than a diseased body." "I took her burning hand," continued the good doctor, "and with sincerity of heart I told her, that in both my characters, as her physcian, and as her friend, I still hoped to be salutary to her, on condition she did not desert herself. You are too low now, added I, pouring out an untasted cordial at my hand; you ought to have taken this two

hours since. She put the cup aside, and, shaking her head, said, you know it will do me no good; these are not the cordials I need. I know there are others within your reach, replied I with seriousness, that would contribute to give efficacy to this, and which you refuse from a despondency of mind which you ought to check. Wherefore is it, that with a brother nigh you, and whose conversation would cheer you, you refuse to see him? His heart is melting with compassion at the intelligence of your dejection and sufferings. "Why then does he not come and tell me so? asked she with agitation. But I know what keeps him at a distance! he cannot say, Lucretia, I forgive you! he cannot say, be comforted!"

"The offence which produced your intemperance, and his too warm resentment, has been fully expiated by the pain which both have experienced from it," observed the doctor; "both were in fault, and

both have regretted the fault. Percival thinks only of a sick and afflicted *sister*. I will pledge my life on the sincerity of his affection for you; and I know his soul seeks to meet you in peace and love." She was oppressed, and gasped for utterance. "Oh! why does he delay?" said she, "I long to see him before I die! You shall see him to day," replied I, "on condition that you will be composed. I am confident that you will find comfort and amusement from his society. She named the hour, and requested that I would come with him, not knowing how the sight of him might affect her. I thought it better to avoid the suspense of procrastinating the interview," continued the doctor, "and Mr. Flint has been with her. Poor Percival was extremely shocked when he saw the alteration that sickness had made in her person. She gave him her hand, and told him, with more composure than I expected, that she took his visit kindly.

He spoke with emotion, and said something of his hopes, and the ensuing summer. I shall not live to see it, answered she, looking stedfastly on him; but it will comfort you, Percival, to know that the prospect of the grave no longer terrifies me; I am not without hope. He interrupted her. Cherish it, said he, eagerly, and, kissing her cheek, cherish it, my dear Lucretia! and may its salutary influence restore your health as well as your peace! Is this your wish? replied she, bursting into tears. Do you, can you forgive me? You had not seen me here, Lucretia, answered the captain with solemnity, had any resentment lurked in my bosom: as I hope for pardon for my own errors and mistakes, so certain is it, that affection and compassion brought me hither. Forget, as I have done, the past; live to be my comfort; and may this hour cancel from your mind every thought that retards your recovery! He again kissed her, and

she hung on his neck, groaning with her agitations. Percival, overcome by this scene, permitted me to lead him from the chamber, and he was not able to see the family; I parted with him in the avenue. My patient, fatigued by these exertions, is fallen into a dose. She is sinking gradually; and will probably be lethargic."

Mary will be anxious to hear the result of this first interview; her aunt requested that the captain would visit her daily.

I have only time to sign the name of your

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. Has Alice informed you that Mr. Snughead is dead? either his son-in-law's return, or his grief for his wife was too much for him: he died at Bath of the gout in his stomach.

LETTER LX.

From the same to the same.

OUR good father has no doubt communicated to Mary the news of her uncle Oliver Flint's death. Peace to his manes! He has left behind him a good report, and we are much pleased with the last proof of his being an honest and friendly man. His heir, Mr. Philip Flint, has written a very handsome letter to the captain, to inform him of his legacy of five thousand pounds, and Mary's of three, adding, that, believing it was the intention of the donor, that there should be no delay in the payment of these bequests, he had transmitted to him the first six months interest of the sum, in order to answer the present unavoidable retardment of the principal sum whilst waiting for his precise

orders. Mr. Flamall still remains obdurate; a circumstance which Mr. Philip Flint in his letter to his mother regrets, as a draw-back on his comforts, and peculiarly oppressive to his mind at a time when he might have been useful as a consoler.

There were letters for Miss Flint from Mr. Flamall and her brother; some precautions were judged requisite in regard to the delivery of these. Doctor Douglass undertook the business, as well as to prepare her for the sable dress of the captain. He asked her how long her brother Oliver had left England; she took this hint, and replied with calmness, that he had been dead to her more than thirty years; but, added she sighing, when we are re-united, this period will appear nothing! Encouraged by her composure he proceeded to mention his honourable acquittal of his promise to Mr. Philip Flint, and the regrets of his friends for his loss; and giving her the letters destined for her was on the

point of retiring, after recommending to her to be careful of fatiguing her spirits. "Remain a moment," replied she, taking the two letters. "You shall see that I mean to preserve my tranquillity. This comes from a hand that never administered to me, aught but comfort."—She placed Mr. Flint's letter under her pillow. "*This* from a man who, miserable in himself, is the common disturber of the peace of others. I will not read his letter: put it into the fire." "I hesitated, in obeying her," continued the doctor; "she perceived it, and tore it into fragments." "Now burn them, and judge, said she, that I can be firm. Mr. Flamall has nothing to do with this hour! I will not be disturbed by his resentments." She paused, and saw the mutilated letter consumed. "I shall not have the comfort my brother Oliver had," observed she, "but I do not murmur. Percival is very kind to me, tell him that I am calm and composed; but

that I shall be busy to day, and cannot see him; and send Lady Maclairn hither."

It appears that her ladyship's commission was to send off an express to Durham for an attorney whom Miss Flint named. Mary will have a letter from the captain to morrow. I am going to pass the day at the Abbey; Sir Murdoch droops a little, he dreads the consequence of his wife's perpetual fatigue; she has a cough not very pleasant to my ears.

Mrs. Allen is of great use to the invalid. She regulates the sick room with her usual address, and has convinced Miss Flint of the utility of quitting her bed for the sopha during some part of the day. She thinks it refreshes her spirits; and some interval of ease at present enables her to make the exertion.

I remain Lucy's affectionate,

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP. IX.

LETTER LXI.

From the same to the same.

THIS letter will contain little beyond the particulars of a scene which recently passed in Miss Flint's room. Our dear Mary's solicitude is unavoidable, and her wish to know what passes here ought to be indulged.

Mrs. Allen was requested to witness the signing of Miss Flint's will, she cheerfully complied; Douglass and Mrs. Warner joining with her.

When this business was terminated, she requested the doctor to inform the

captain that she wished to see him after dinner; and, with a languid smile, she added, tell him that Mrs. Allen shall give him his coffee.

When alone with our friend she begged of her to be the witness to the conversation she meditated on for the evening. "Do not refuse me," continued she. "I have a few instructions to leave with my brother, and you will be useful; you will hear nothing to grieve *you*, although it may affect him, and flatter me; but I wish to finish my business with this world!"

The captain, in Mrs. Allen's words, was punctual to his time. His sister was on the sopha, but looked flushed and fatigued. "He was agitated," continued Mrs. Allen, "and I said, we are doing well to day, Sir." He took his seat by her, and pressed her offered hand with his lips. She immediately spoke of Mr. Oliver Flint's death, making some obvious reflexions on

the event. Then suddenly looking at her brother's dress, she said, I hope, Percival, you do not mourn that poor Oliver has given to a brother who stood by him as a son, an inheritance that ought in the eye of justice to have been yours. The captain coloured, and replied with eagerness, that he was perfectly contented with the proofs he had received of his brother's consideration. He has rendered me comfortable, added he, for the remainder of my life, and has placed Mary in a condition fully adequate to her ambition. I am grateful, and sincerely hope, that Philip Flint will live to show the world he was worthy of the man whom he has succeeded. Miss Flint was softened to tears. God grant, said she with emotion, that my will may be thus satisfactory to you! I have done for the best, Percival, I have been governed by only one principle. Let me die in the hope that you will accept it as an evidence of my repentance for hav-

ing so long overlooked your *just claims!*— She spoke this with agony.

My dear Lucretia, said the captain hastily, and startled at the disorder she was in, let us drop a subject so useless. I have no wants, no wishes ungratified, but that of seeing you well. I cannot bear your kindness, replied the poor weeping Miss Flint; I have not deserved it! Say not so to *me*, answered the brother with tenderness. We have all, my dear sister, to make this acknowledgment to our Maker. We have all of us errors to regret, and something for contrition, but we have a merciful Judge, who knows that we are weak and fallible: let me conjure you to endeavour to recover your spirits. Let us employ the allotted space allowed us in acts of love and mutual aid. Your friend, as well as physician, assures me, that your malady is augmented by the depression of your mind. Exert your faith; animate your spirits by reflecting, that

you are in the hands of a Being infinite in mercy. Would you like to have Mary with you? She wishes to see you, and might be useful to you. I could not bear to see her, answered Miss Flint with a voice broken by sorrow; but it is not from unkindness, that I reject her, it is not hatred nor cruelty that govern me. I am certain it is not, replied the captain; No: my dear sister! their empire is over; and a temper, to which worlds would be nothing in the balance, has now a place in your heart. Oh! live to enjoy the blessed exchange! live for my comfort!

"I thought his sister must have fainted," continued Mrs. Allen, wiping the tears of sympathy from her honest face; and I hinted that she wanted her cordial. The captain understood me, and I believe would have gladly retired himself and left her to my care; for he rose and observed, he had staid too long, and that she needed rest. Rest, repeated she, detaining him,

oh, be not so deceived; I need no rest, I can find none that chears me like seeing you. He again took his seat, and with composure observed, that she had promised him coffee: and that he would remain, on condition she would try to be quiet and listen to our chat. She smiled, and I took my post.

Again he offered to leave her, when, with composure, she said, my dear Percival you must indulge me; this is the last time I will mention business which may distress you; but I shall not be easy until I have finally settled my concerns with this world. Whatever you find done in this way, when I am dead, remember what I have already said, I have done all in love, and have been as just as I could be to you. You will find my will in that cabinet, continued she, directing his attention to it. Lady Maclairn has my instructions in respect to all that it contains

except the will; she will inspect it in your presence.

Here is a present for my niece. May it prove to her, what of late it has been to me, a blessing! The captain paced the room in silence. This picture, my dear and invaluable friend, continued she, addressing me, you will see buried with me. She gazed intently on the miniature of Mr. Philip Flint, which she wears in her bosom. Poor fellow! added she mournfully, he will not soon forget Lucretia! He will regret that he was not with me.—I cannot stand this! said the agitated captain, and were I not convinced, Lucretia, that even in this depression of your mind, there is a healing power more potent than all human aids, you would break my heart.—I will spare your feelings, answered she, only let me say a few words more: I wish to have your concurrence. I have nominated Mr. Greenwood to succeed Snughead in the Farefield living; but if

you think he would like the presentation better from you, speak, and it shall be so managed. " I do not believe," added Mrs. Allen, " that the captain could have uttered a word, had his friend's being made an archbishop depended on it; he was quite overcome by his feelings."

" At length he ventured to say, should you like to see Mr. Greenwood? He would be sorry to see me, replied she; he is a good man, and will pity me; but I wish not to see him. I have no want of his assistance; she raised her eyes to Heaven, and paused. " You may imagine," continued Mrs. Allen, " that her exertions had subdued her. The captain no sooner left her, than she went to her bed; and I have the comfort of quitting her in a peaceful sleep."

This recital, my Lucy, will affect poor Mary; but it will do her no harm hereafter. Her mind wants firmness for the trials of life; and she must acquire strength

by the usual means. I have occasion for more patience and fortitude than I possess. I tremble for the consequences which will result to Mrs. Allen, should Miss Flint continue long in her present condition. What will you say to the cares and attention that devote my dear friend to her room the whole day? What will you say to her swelled legs, got by watching her through half the night? Will it be any comfort to you, when she is on a sick bed, to be told that her piety and prayers are the cordials that quiet the perturbed *spirit* of the miserable invalid? I have yet much to do with my rebellious one; and I honestly confess, that, sincerely as I rejoice at Miss Flint's present temper of mind, I should murmur to give a saint to her funeral obsequies. My serious remonstrances have answered; Mrs. Allen is gone to bed, and I will take care she shall not quit it to-night, to traverse half clothed, the passages to that of another.

What with fogs within, and fogs without, it has been necessary for me to make a sun of my own. Sir Murdoch has undertaken to teach me to paint in oil colours; and I have begun to copy a landscape "très riant," for I cannot help laughing at my imitation of a good copy.

In continuation.

I was summoned below stairs. The enclosed will explain the cause. Sir Murdoch and his son set out for Putney tomorrow morning; and we are in a bustle, and somewhat anxious about the *roads* and *cold weather*. I must help Lady Maclairn in this alarm.

Adieu, your's,

R. COWLEY.

LETTER LXII.

From Mr. Serge to Sir Murdoch Maclairn.

Putney, Dec. 3.

MY dear and honoured friend! It is all over with Jeremiah Serge! The public papers will tell you that he is desolate. To-morrow I shall lose sight of her precious remains! But what of that! Do I not see her always before me? Do I not hear her voice, and the blessed consolations she gave me. My name was in the last sigh that conveyed her to her God! Oh! she was a child, Sir Murdoch, worthy of a heavenly Father! She was too good to be lent me long! and yet I never forgot to be grateful for the loan: my daily prayers were thanks to God, for the bless-

ings she imparted! so affectionate, so gentle, so wise, and yet so young! What a bulwark of defence has my age and weakness lost! I do not know why I write to you; but I am so oppressed by my thoughts, and my kind friends here fatigue me. They cannot help it. They do for the best; but what can be done for me! Is it not hard to see the sapless trunk left to the wintry blasts; and the blossoms of the spring cut off? If my child had been spared only a *little while*, she might have closed my eyes, and I had been at rest. But I must not murmur against God! My Caroline warned me not to grieve as "one without hope." And I will hope, Sir Murdoch, that my present feelings will soon effect my deliverance. I shall soon be re-united to my child. I am very ill, and I think it is better to tell you what also disturbs me in this hour of tribulation before I send away this letter. I have not been negligent in regard to my worldly

concerns, as these relate to the security of my wife and children; for I lost no time, in executing that duty, after you had so graciously consented to be my children's friend. But my heart is now set upon seeing you and Malcolm once more before I die. You are a good man, Sir Murdoch, and, in the sight of God, that is the only title that will survive you. I think you will not refuse to come to me: no comfort on earth would be so welcome; but do not delay your journey, if you mean to see me; for indeed I am sinking fast. My poor wife is on a sick bed; she might have foreseen the blow more than she did, but we have all our faults! Poor soul! She finds at this hour that life needs more, than a doublet of silk, to guard the pilgrim in his rough journey! I am sure Malcolm will second me in my request. Tell him, that poor Caroline spoke of him not an hour before she died,

and called him her good brother Malcolm.

God preserve you, Sir Murdoch, from knowing the sorrow which fills the heart of

JEREMIAH SERGE.

LETTER LXIII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

Friday morning.

MY letter * of Monday last contained the intelligence of the good baronet's safety, and the comfortable hopes that are entertained at Putney, that Mr. Serge will not need executors to his will, for some

* This letter does not appear.

time at least; for the sight of the travellers has been a cordial to him. This morning we had another letter; it was from Malcolm; all the business which occasioned the journey had been finished to poor Mr. Serge's contentment; but he had exerted himself too much; and the gout had overtaken him. Malcolm adds, that the doctor regards this indisposition as favourable to his friend's general health, and that he is chief nurse; Mrs. Fairly attends her mother with assiduity, though unwell herself; she is, he says, the shadow of the Leonora we know, and he thinks her in a consumption. Her husband, from time to time, attends her; but his reception is cold and ceremonious in Mr. Serge's room, and he is not less restrained on his part with the guests. Sir Murdoch is in perfect health, and the counsellor shares, in his leisure hours, and contributes to his amusement.

Lady Maclairn summons me to perform my part of the task we have before us; she has finished her part of it, and I have to fill the second sheet of paper to Putney. You will soon find me with you again; but my good father must have this hour, and the satisfaction of knowing that his wife is easy and reasonable, as is your

RACHEL COWLEY.

CHAP. X.

LETTER LXIV.

Sunday morning.

WILL my Lucy need from me the obvious reflexions, which will result from the perusal of this letter? "No:" nor have I time to make them, though the impressions on my mind are such as will indelibly remain, as admonitions to warn me against too much security in this world's air bubbles!

I had so well sustained my part with my pen, in writing to Sir Murdoch, that I had produced a cheerfulness on the pensive brow of his wife; and she detained me with her, until it was too late to fi-

nish my letter to you. I therefore continued to read and chat with my friend till near the dining hour. The appearance of Doctor Douglass was nothing new; but we were equally struck with his manner and countenance; and her ladyship, with alarm, asked him, whether Lucretia was worse. "No," replied he, with visible distress, "there is no material change; but she has asked for you." Lady Maclairn immediately quitted us to go to her sister's room. "She is dying," observed I, "you think so, I am certain; why do you flatter Lady Maclairn with hopes?" "Poor creature!" answered he, "I wish she had only this shock to support, there would then be little to justify my fears for her; but I am a coward, Miss Cowley, and you must assist me, and yet I tremble even in soliciting your aid; for these exertions can do you no good." "Never think of me," said I eagerly. "What are the dreadful tidings you

bring?" "That a sinner is departed," answered he with solemnity; "that Lady Maclairn has no longer a brother. Let me conduct you to your apartment," continued he, seeing me pale and trembling, "I must consult you; and we shall be interrupted here." I made no reply; but yielded to his assistance.

A burst of tears relieved me. "Wherefore is it," observed poor Douglass, with compassion, "that you seem destined, by Providence, to be the support of this unfortunate family; and, by the continual exertions of your fortitude and humanity, thus to diminish your own comforts and weaken your health?" I admire you, and I reverence your Mrs. Hardcastle; but your strength of mind is uncommon! "Try it," replied I, "let me hear the whole of this dreadful affair; it cannot be worse than I apprehend." "Nor is it better," answered he; "and we have to guard against surprises. It must be disco-

vered. The public papers will have the intelligence, and Lady Maclairn must be prepared; are you equal to the task?" "I trust I am," answered I, "otherwise my strength of mind is no virtue." He grasped my hand, and said some words, expressive of his approbation, then proceeded to inform me, that Captain Flint had found on his table the preceding evening, on returning from his sister's, the packet which he now produced. "I was sent for," added the doctor, "and we passed nearly the whole night in reading the contents, and consulting the best means of communicating them to Lady Maclairn. The captain declared he was unable to do it; and thought himself peculiarly disqualified for the office, it being no secret, that he despised the man, and was not surprised at his end. "I have no heart on such occasions," continued Douglass, rising and pacing the room. I have a trick of looking beyond "this di-

urnal sphere," and I hate to announce the death of the wicked. There are the letters; I will leave you for an hour and then return; you may want me as a physician."

To the hasty perusal of them, followed my thanks to Providence for the absence of Sir Murdoch; and without suffering the energy of my mind to relax, I sent for Lady Maclairn to my room. She instantly perceived my emotion, and I at once acknowledged that I had bad news to communicate from Jamaica; and which Captain Flint was unequal to the task of doing. She gasped for breath. "Nothing can equal," continued I, "Mr. Philip Flint's solicitude for you, thank God! he has stood the shock: his friends are without alarm for him. Mr. Flamall's death must be supported, my dear Lady Maclairn; let me see you composed." "It was sudden?" said she, fixing her eyes on my face, "It was ——— I made no other answer, than falling on her shoulder and

weeping." "It is enough," said she, trembling and sinking from my embrace. I was terrified, for she did not faint as I expected, but with her eyes fixed, and with a deadly groan she articulated the name of Duncan. I immediately perceived the dreadful idea, which had taken possession of her mind. He is at rest, my dear friend," said I, "and now blessed for his faithfulness to you." I was proceeding, but she heard me not. Horror had transfixed her to her seat. She was as cold as marble, and not a tear fell. I rang the bell with violence. The doctor entered at the same moment; he instantly bled her, and she was put into my bed. Douglass watched her, under great uneasiness, until she appeared to me to be dead. I really thought she was, when her eyes closed and her stiffened limbs relaxed. "Take courage," said he, "the worst is passed; she will recover." The event shewed his judgment;

for in a few minutes she burst into violent sobbings, and the death-like coldness of her hand gave place to a friendly perspiration. He gave her a cordial; and ordering no one to disturb her by speaking, I was left with her. By his orders, I neither checked her tears, nor evaded her enquiries. I believe, however, that she dosed for some time, as not a sigh escaped her. At length, putting aside the curtain, she spoke, and I approached her. "Angel of mercy and goodness," said she, kissing my hand, "tell me, has no one seen my distress?" "The servants saw you in a fainting state," replied I. "But they never saw me so ill I believe," observed she with anxiety, "Did nothing escape me?" I satisfied her at once on this point, and at her request briefly, and I think wisely, informed her of the leading events contained in the captain's letters. She wept, and I proceeded. "In this trial of your faith and fortitude," said I,

"it is not possible you can overlook the merciful Being, who has secured Duncan from guilt, by removing him to an abode of peace." "I cannot express my thankfulness," replied she, "but I feel the gratitude.—But my wretched lost brother!" She shuddered anew—"He is before an unerring Judge," replied I, interrupting her. It neither becomes you nor myself to limit infinite mercy. You are now called upon, by that God of mercy, to submit to his power and to trust in his goodness and compassion. Let it be your concern to perform, with courage, the part assigned you. It has been a difficult one; but not beyond your strength. Remember that you are still a wife, and a mother; and your duties will give you patience and peace."

Emulate the man in whose sorrows you have shared; "he was faithful to the end." Deprive him not of the glory of having loved your reputation and your honour

more than his own. To Lady Maclairn he sacrificed his fondest hopes, his vengeance on his oppressor, his ease in life, and even the name of her faithful Duncan to his last moments. Weep for him! continued I, with my eyes streaming; neither religion nor virtue forbid this tribute to his memory; but live to preserve Sir Murdoch Maclairn's peace. "I would die rather than disturb it," said she with agony. "It is my misery, my past punishment, that whilst my soul mourns the fate of a man ruined by my affection, *another* not less worthy, not less beloved has been involved in all the perils of my miserable condition and conduct. I cannot live without Maclairn's esteem and tenderness; I cannot die without affecting him. I must still wear the odious cloak of deceit; I must still impose on his noble unsuspecting nature. Oh fatal consequences of my quitting the paths of truth!" added she, with interrupted sighs;

"wretched fruits of my weak credulity and childish fears! Had I been firm, had I shown myself to the world as the reprobated widow of poor Duncan, I should long ere this have smiled at its contempt, or been at peace in my grave. But for what am I not now answerable?" Not for your brother's wickedness," replied I eagerly, "you have a fair account, my dear friend, to set against the errors of your youth; recollect the place you have filled in society, the years of suffering your tender cares have mitigated, the duties of the mother you have performed, the happiness you have administered; and I will add, the pangs your courage has sustained in order to effect the tranquillity of others. Secrecy is now a duty, and an obligation enforced upon you, by every motive of virtue and utility. Let me see you, what you may be; unless, by recalling the past, you destroy your health, and my hopes. The storm is passed; and

if you experience not the joy of an unclouded sky, yet the evening of your days may be serene and quiet."

She promised me to be all I wished, and to brace every nerve against her husband's return. I think she is more composed to day; and at her request I have been with Miss Flint. As I expected, she began by lamenting her ladyship's sudden indisposition, and added, that Percival also had a cold which prevented her seeing him. I gave her hopes of her sister's speedy recovery, and endeavoured to keep up the conversation; but she soon dosed, which I find she again does half her time, and I left her without being noticed.

Good night, I am going to bed, and to sleep if I can. Mrs. Allen will be with Lady Maclairn. I direct my letters to Sedley. You will understand by the accompaniments my reason for so doing. Mary might wonder at not being trusted; Mr. Sedley will give you this packet.

Adieu. Let me know that the intelligence is secure in your hands. My friend wishes you to keep these with the other papers: she has read them.

I am really quite worn out with one or two night's watching; but do not fancy me sick, should I be lazy. We expect Sir Murdoch the day after to-morrow; and I may have too much business on my hands to write to you before Saturday.

LETTER LXV.

From Mr. Paget to Capt. Percival Flint.

(Enclosed in the preceeding.)

DEAR SIR, *Kingston, Jamaica, &c.*

THE melancholy contents of this letter will sufficiently account for its being written by a stranger to you. The duty as-

signed to me will, however, at once show me the friend of Mr. Flint, and the painful witness of the distress, into which all his family are plunged.

The sudden death of Mr. Flamall, his uncle, is an event, which, under the *common* circumstances of human life, would require precaution, in the communication of it at *Farefield Hall.* But my poor friend has to dread every thing, lest the catastrophe of his uncle's end, should reach his mother through the channel of the public papers. He conjures you to consult his brother Malcolm in those measures which are necessary to prevent this blow reaching the hall too suddenly for his mother's strength. Before I begin the detail of those particulars, which you will naturally wish to have before you, permit me to have the satisfaction of assuring you, that my *patient*, and I may add my *dearest friend*, Philip Flint, is in a degree recovered from the illness brought on by

the first agitation of his spirits; his amiable wife is well, and as yet a stranger to the shocking tale. I will now begin my melancholy task.

The arrival of a large vessel in this port, from New York, and commanded by a Captain Nelson, may be assigned as *one* of those cases which have produced the event before me. In consequence of Mr. Flamall's having a concern in the cargo, he was induced to quit his retirement; and to come to the Creek plantation, near this place. To this circumstance I was a stranger, however, having, as Mr. Flint's friend, dropped a man, generally condemned for his inflexibility; and at present forgotten by that society, which for some time he had so carefully, and gloomily avoided.

I happened to be at the general rendezvous, a coffee-house here, when a merchant, of the name of Gilpin, an intimate friend of mine, entered, with Cap-

tain Nelson, the newly arrived stranger. I was presented to him by my friend: and, in a way, which the captain and myself both appeared to understand. I found, that Mr. Gilpin had long known this gentleman; and in a few minutes I thought I had long known him myself, from the frankness of his manner. We were settling our plan for dining together; when one of the waiters told Mr. Nelson, that "Mr. Flamall was on horseback at the door, and wished to speak to him for a minute." The captain instantly obeyed the summons, and, in a few minutes, he returned to the room, and I saw Flamall pass the window. I remarked to some one near me, that he looked ill and dejected. The captain, was now disturbed by a more serious business. Some one in the passage called loudly for assistance; and the captain was told, that "his steward was in the agonies of death in the corridor." We flew to the spot; and, as a medical man, it became my duty to suc-

cour the sick one. He had been suddenly surprised, by the bursting of a large blood vessel, and the case was critical and justly alarming. I was, however, struck by the uncommon interest which the captain appeared to take in the poor man's preservation. Every accommodation the house could afford was speedily procured; and I saw my patient in a spacious bedroom, with a negro woman for his attendant, whom I knew was a good nurse. Some abatement of the hæmorrhage, having succeeded to bleeding in the arm, and other remedies, I left him to his repose; and joined my friends at Mr. Gilpin's, whose house was not remote from my patient. Captain Nelson listened to my account of him with the utmost anxiety. "I would give half I am worth," said he, grasping my hand, "to save this man." This complaint came on in a moment, they tell me: he was apparently well when I passed him; and that was not five mi-

nutes before you saw him; those near him say it was a fit; for they heard him groan, and he rose from his seat, as if to seek air, when he fell back and the blood gushed from his mouth." I saw, in this account, his hopes of the man's recovery; which I could not encourage, and wished not to depress.

After dinner he attended me to visit him. "I have known this man many years," said he. "I have no doubt of his having been unfortunate; his education and manners speak the gentleman: his conduct and industry the honest man. His reserve and dejection have imposed on me a respect for his misfortunes; and to this hour I only know, that his name is Charles, and that he is *a very extraordinary man*; for his fidelity to me, has not lessened his influence with my people; who all love him as their best friend. To-morrow morning, I shall bring his boy on shore to be with him." "Then he has a

son?" observed I. "One of his adoption," answered he; "and his motives for so doing, will give you his character. I had lost sight of him for some years, having left him in London. In his passage from thence to New York, where, as it appears, he was as poor as when I first saw him, he was a common seaman: one of the crew, a native of New York fell sick and died on the passage, recommending to Charles his aged mother, and his child, *this boy*. He promised to take care of them, and he kept his word; for taking up his abode in the old woman's miserable hovel, he supported the family by his labour. In this situation, I again met him. The death of the woman, and my offer to take the boy with him, induced him to accept the post of ship-steward on board my ship; where he has been several years. You will judge of him as a schoolmaster, when you see George. "Poor lad!" continued the

captain, "he will break his heart; but I will be his friend."

I returned to my patient, but did not allow him to speak; he was told that his George would be with him in the morning, and his hand only was offered to the captain.

On entering the room the following day, I found George at his post. The patient was raised by his pillows; and one of the finest youths, my eyes ever beheld, filled the space they had left. He was bending over the sick man, in an attitude convenient for his head to rest on the lad's shoulder, who was, as I judged, between fifteen and sixteen, and in the full vigour of youth. He raised his penetrating large black eyes to my face, whilst I made my enquiries of the woman, relative to the condition of his father. Her replies were not unfavourable; and never shall I forget the look of gratitude I then received! But overcome by his sensibility,

he wept most bitterly, and hid his face. Captain Nelson entered at this moment. "Why, how is this, my boy," cried he endeavouring to hide his feelings, "Did you not promise to have a good heart! The doctor will soon set us all to rights again; so have courage." The *doctor*, my dear Sir, was not so sanguine; but recommending silence and repose took his leave: George assuring me, that he would watch his father's *eyes*, and those would tell him what he wanted. In the evening I was with him again. All was in order, and a silence, like death, prevailed in the room. George was reading a French Telemachus; the patient was dosing; and the negro woman was dismissed for some hours of needful rest. The next day I had hopes, that my patient had a chance; but the following morning I found, to my surprise, only the nurse with him. On enquiry, I learned from her, that his father had sent him with a letter to the Creek

plantation. "Why did you not find a porter?" asked I. "Because he said," answered she, in a low whisper, "he could not die contented, unless he knew that it was delivered to Mr. Flamall." Though by no means pleased with this exertion of writing, I said but little to the sick man, contenting myself with his answer. "*I shall write no more.*" I prolonged my stay, partly to supply nurse's absence, whom I sent for something needful, and partly to gratify my curiosity. The sick man's person was calculated to excite it. His physiognomy was noble; his features regular; dark blue eyes, which, though sunk and dimmed by his condition, were expressive of manly fortitude; his hair was of a light chestnut colour, but in places, striped with the signs of age, for it was even changed to nearly white; he was extremely fair; and the paleness of death was relieved, by a lingering colour in his lips. Observing the beauty of

his teeth, I asked him his age. He replied, that he believed he was turned of fifty. He was neatly dressed in a blue and white cotton waistcoat and trowsers; and reclined on the outside of the matrass. A statuary would not have wished for a more perfect model of the human form! He was in height, I should think, within six feet. I observed to him, that his chest was not made to oppress his lungs; and that I flattered myself, the malady which had so suddenly overtaken him, might have for its course, a less dangerous source. He smiled, and said, he had never had any tendency to consumptive symptoms; nor did he ever attribute his want of health to a weak constitution. At this instant George entered, covered with dust, and exhausted by heat and fatigue. He approached the bed, and said, "I have seen Mr. Flamall, and given your letter into his own hand." "It is well:" replied my patient, with an

emotion that alarmed me; for I was still feeling the pulse, and those would have betrayed it, without the suffusion which passed his cheek. I turned towards George, and after lecturing him with kindness, for his imprudent speed, I insisted on his leaving the room, and laying down for some hours. A sign, from his father which he understood, made him docile, and he retired. Soon after I left the sick room, cautioning the nurse, neither to admit Mr. Flamall nor any message from him or others to reach her charge; and taking some sherbet in my hand, I sought George's little room. He had obeyed me, and had taken off his clothes. I told him the consequences which would result from any exertion or surprise to his father; warning him to be on the watch. He said, he did not believe his father expected either a visit, or an answer from the gentleman in question. He had told him not to wait for any orders; and had appeared

only anxious, that his own letter should reach him safely.

I proceeded to the coffee-house, where, as I expected, I met Captain Nelson. I gave him this detail; and he thought no more of it, I believe, for he was surrounded by busy faces; and he told me, that he should be with Charles soon, and would meet me at Mr. Gilpin's before sunset.

I dined with my friend; and we were quietly conversing, when Captain Nelson bursting into the room, said with agony, "it is all over with him! nothing can now save him!" I waited not for more intelligence, but seizing my hat, hastily made my way to the sick man, Nelson following me. It was, indeed, "all over with him;" all our care and attention availed nothing! For in a few hours he died. Poor Nelson, during this scene of painful suspense, lamented, in terms of the bitterest grief, that he had caused the relapse. He said, that he had found him

quiet and apparently easy. The nurse said George was sound asleep, and mentioned your orders," added the captain. "I asked Charles what were his connexions with Mr. Flamall;" he calmly replied, that he had known him in his youth. "And was that all?" asked I; "come, be open with me, you have had George in your head, I dare say, and fancying to make a friend for the poor lad; but give yourself no concern about him. Let the worst come to the worst, he will never want a father whilst I have a guinea; so try and be a man again, and the brother of one who loves you as a brother." He grasped my hand with convulsive strength. "My God!" said he aloud, "I thank thee, and die satisfied that thou art a God, merciful and gracious!" "The blood again gushed from his mouth; and I flew to Gilpin's."

I will pass over the sorrow of his poor George, in order to hasten to the next still

more serious and shocking event. *Mr. Sinclair,* the brother of my patient, Mrs. Flint, brought me a summons to "Upland," the residence of the family, prepared to expect hourly the lady's want of my assistance. I accompanied her brother home; but found Mrs. Flint, though in her own apartment, with her female friends, perfectly contented with my being within the house. The interval was devoted to my friend Philip's amusement, whose anxiety for the safety of his wife was apparent. We were rallying him on this subject; and drinking to the health of his expected blessing, when Mr. Sinclair was called from the table. I will pass over the detail. Juba, an old and freed slave of the late Mr. Cowley's, but who has from his master's death remained in his post of superintendant at the Creek house, was the bearer of the intelligence which follows; and which you will conceive produced the most dreadful sensations of horror and

surprise. "Mr. Flamall was dead, and by his own hand!" Sinclair and myself lost no time, in returning with Juba, leaving Mr. Flint to the care of Mr. Lindsey, and Mr. Montrose, his friends, and inmates.

On the road Juba gave us the following particulars. On the preceding morning, he it was, who saw George, who enquired of him for Mr. Flamall, saying, he had a letter to deliver to him, which he was ordered to give to no other person. "I asked the lad from whom he had received his commission," continued the faithful Juba, and he replied, from Captain Nelson's steward. Knowing that we had many bales in his ship, I immediately concluded, that the letter referred to business, relative to these goods; and I was on the point of telling the young man, that I would be answerable for the safety of the letter; but at that moment, Mr. Flamall appeared, and took it himself. I shall be

at Kingston to day, said he, holding the letter carelessly in his hand, and shall speak to your captain.' The lad bowed, and was retreating; when Mr. Flamall asked him to rest, and take some refreshment. He declined the offer, replying that his father would want him. I entered the house; and he departed. Mr. Flamall was not long, I believe, before he went to his apartment. He saw no one for some hours; at length he rang his bell, and ordered his horse to be prepared. We have lately observed him as a man struggling with something wrong in his mind. He has been very odd at times; and his groom said, he was in one of his silent fits; and chose to go by himself. He did not return home, till a late hour in the evening. The horse appeared heated and fatigued. He went to his bed room, saying, that he wanted nothing then, and should ring in the morning, when he did. Hour succeeded hour. We heard him pacing in

the library; and we began to fear that all was not right with him. His servant was curious, as well as uneasy; he stopped me on the staircase, to tell me, that he had peeped through the key hole, that his master was in his wrapping gown and night cap, and was writing, and with a countenance that made him tremble: another servant was going to make his observations by the same means," continued poor Juba, "when the report of a pistol checked him, and appalled us all. We burst into the room. It was too late! you will see such a corpse! I lost not, however, my presence of mind; one look at the shattered mangled head of the poor wretch was enough for me! But whilst others were gazing on the scene of horror, I secured the written papers on his desk; which I will now give you."

Juba drew the rumpled sheets of paper from his bosom, and presented them to Mr. Sinclair. It is needless for me to

add, that the horrid explosion, had done its work. The aim was sure!

Herewith, you have the copies of the two letters above mentioned. Mr. Sinclair recommends caution to you in respect to their *mysterous* contents.

I shall have perhaps time to add something more to this letter; but lest I be mistaken, receive, Sir, the unfeigned regard, and sympathy of your very humble servant,

THOMAS PAGET.

LETTER LXVI.

(Enclosed in Mr. Paget's.)

To Mr. Flamall.

SHOUDEST thou start, Flamall, at the sight of these well known characters, for my hand, like my heart, has but *one*

for my purposes. Should thy knees tremble, and the blood recede in terror from thy cheek, bless Heaven! Hail these indications of its mercy! Thou hast not yet outlived humanity, thou art not yet abandoned to everlasting destruction. Be it so! Oh God, infinite in goodness, almighty in power!

Were I certain, Flamall, that with the form of man there were yet one single spark left unextinguished of *the spirit of a man*, I would invite thee to my dying couch, for it is near thee. I would bid thee compare it with thy nightly bed of prosperous villany. And here settle those accounts of the guardianship and *gains*. Though for years in bondage, I have been free from guilt. No parent will demand from me a ruined oppressed son; no confederate in vice and cruelty and treachery will point *to me* as the betrayer of his soul! But thou wilt recal to memory the issue

of thy crimes; and the names of thy agents in mischief.

I die in peace. My wife knows my innocence and my wrongs. If it be needful for thy repentance, apply to her; and with the tale of thy brotherly care, of an innocent, and virtuous orphan-sister, thou mayest have the relation of the woes thou hast inflicted on thy *ward Charles*.

Detain not the messenger: I wait his return to breathe my last sigh on his faithful bosom. Thou hast been defeated, Ffamall! The tear of affection will fall on my remains; and I shall be remembered as one who has not lived to be the fell destroyer of my fellow-man, nor as one abandoned by his Maker.

LETTER LXVII.

From Mr. Flamall to Mr. Philip Flint.

(Enclosed in Mr. Paget's.)

HORROR! unutterable horror! anguish, despair! Twist not thus my brain! he is dead! and died with his hopes! expecting to be welcomed in a new existence, by assembled angels, hailed by spirits like his own, and received by a God of mercy who will recompense his long sufferings and faith.—Delusions all! The tales of the nursery made up for children! I reject them. When these atoms which compose this palpitating frame are disunited I shall be at peace: for I shall be *nothing*. But wherefore do I pause?

What is to me the world to which I now cleave? Why does my heart turn to thee, Philip? I know thou *also* abhorrest me, yet I would not have thee curse me, for of all men, I have a claim to thy pity. I love thee still. I would bless thee, but I dare not. For if there be a God, whose awful indignation takes cognizance of sin; my blessing would be converted into a malediction on thy head. Blot me from thy memory; acknowledge not the name of Flamall, nor permit thy children to know, that I was once thy guide, thy friend —— Nay —— Distraction! Why do I hesitate ——

Mr. Paget in continuation.

It is needless to make any comments on the foregoing letters. It is but too apparent, that Flamall was the aggressor; beyond this all is conjecture. We have, on our part, acted with caution. Captain Nelson has been questioned closely, as to

his knowledge of the person, supposed to have been the cause of the dreadful end of Mr. Flamall. He repeated, on oath, his evidence in favour of this unknown, and adhered to the account he had before given me of his acquaintance with him; adding, that he had not a doubt of his having been an injured man. His sorrow, for his loss, was not concealed; for he even shed tears, and with an oath affirmed, that not only himself but every man in his ship had lost a brother. Poor George was with him, and looked the picture of despair: he was examined also: he had never heard his father and protector name Mr. Flamall until the morning he gave him the letter. Not a single paper was found in his chest, except a note, in which he gives, with his blessing, his little property of clothes, linen, and a few books to this boy. Thus, has every enquiry terminated. I cannot help believing, that you will be gratified by knowing, that

Captain Nelson means to protect the lad in question.

Mr. Flamall has been careful to leave no traces behind him, that may help to elucidate this mystery, or throw a light an any other of his private concerns. Not a paper, nor a letter escaped his vigilant cautions. Juba tells us, that from the time his nephew's marriage was announced, he has suspected his mind to have been deranged at times, and that he was continually reading and burning letters and papers when in his room. One striking proof of his former connexion with the unfortunate stranger, Charles, is much talked of. He called at the house where he lodged and died; and to the enquiries he made concerning the sick man, one of the servants answered, that he was dead. He said, he wished to see him, having known him in his youth. The negro woman attended him to the deceased man's room. He looked atten-

tively at the corpse; appeared agitated, and sighing said, "his troubles are over." But such was the impression the object before him had produced, that he left the house, and forgot his horse, which he had tied to the door he had passed. A waiter perceiving it, followed him with the animal; he mounting, and without speaking, put him on his full speed.

THOMAS PAGET.

CHAP. XI.

LETTER LXVIII.

From Capt. Sinclair to Capt. Flint.

MY DEAR SIR, *Jamaica.*

OUR worthy and zealous friend Mr. Paget having spared me the painful detail of events, which, of late, have rendered this abode of peace one of sorrow and consternation, I will employ my pen on subjects of better and renewed hopes. In the first place, Lady Maclairn will be soothed by hearing, that Philip is the father of a fine healthy boy; and that the mother is doing well, and already the nurse. She has been cautiously told of

Mr. Flamall's death; and thus the suspense and alarm avoided, that would have been occasioned by her seeing her husband's dejection, which was but too apparent, in spite of his endeavours. We must give him credit for more sensibility on this melancholy occasion, than we feel ourselves. To say the truth, the termination of a life passed without honour or satisfaction, is, in my opinion, little entitled to the tear of affection; although the means, which Flamall employed for the purpose, are appalling to nature and to the Christian. It is a happy circumstance for my brother, that he has uniformly conducted himself in respect to his uncle, so as to have secured his own self-acquittal. This, with the prospect of happiness, before his eyes, will, in time, restore him. We shall, however, wait with anxiety for news from Farefield. Had not his wife's critical situation checked his solicitude for his mother, I believe we could not have

prevented his undertaking the voyage to England, for the purpose of supporting her, in the trial which nearly overset himself.

I beg you to be particular in your account of Lady Maclairn's health, as also Miss Flint's.

Let Miss Cowley be assured, that her concerns will suffer nothing from the loss of *her agent*. We have been fortunate in having with us a *Mr. Montrose*; this gentleman is the early friend of Philip and Margaret; and is brother to Mrs. Lindsey, my sister's first nurse, and constant companion at present.

Montrose makes a better consoler than myself. I therefore yield up to him this office; as being his by profession; and no man can better know, and perform his duty. I have not, however, been idle. The attested papers you will receive with this, will inform you that all has been done that could be done. Flamall's late gloom

and the evidence of the servants, induced the coroner's inquest to give in a verdict of lunacy. We have discovered no letters nor papers of consequence, to his private concerns; and one letter excepted, of a recent date, from his banker, which mentions his having received the half year's interest of five thousand pounds Bank stock: this of course devolves to his sister. I cannot conclude this letter, without telling you, that I believe, from the order in which all Flamall's accounts were, that he has, for sometime, been meditating how to escape from a world, in which he knew he was regarded with contempt. You may think me too harsh; be it so. But believe me sincere and honest, and

Your's to command,

FRANCIS SINCLAIR.

LETTER LXIX.

From Dr. Douglass to Mr. Hardcastle.

Fairfield, Dec. 30.

I conjure you, my dear Sir, to rely on my assurances. Miss Cowley is entirely out of danger. We have a decided intermission, and are hourly gaining on the enemy. But I will not disguise my fears, for the consequences which will probably result from you and Miss Hardcastle's visit here at this time. The truth is, that as terror and exertions beyond Miss Cowley's strength, produced the fever, it is my opinion, that joy, and a new demand on her feelings, will produce *a return of it*. Calmness and repose are necessary to give efficacy to the medicines which have hitherto been useful, and I entreat of you,

to postpone your journey, till my patient is more able to welcome you.

To say what this young creature's fortitude has been, is beyond my abilities! I only know, that I shall in future blush, when I hear strength of mind called a *masculine endowment.*

You will easily imagine, how little prepared she was, after the attention and exertions she had shown to Lady Maclairn, to sustain the sudden terror, which Miss Flint's death produced. Every precaution had been used to prevent the intelligence of Mr. Flamall's death, from reaching the dying woman. She was so weak, as to bear with apathy her sister's absence from the room; indeed, she noticed little those who were about her, being for the most part in a lethargic stupor, and gradually sinking. In the neighbourhood it was, however, no secret that Mr. Flamall had *died suddenly.* Warner, Miss Flint's woman, had in the morning left

her post to a chamber maid, in order to get some repose. This girl's mother had been frequently employed in the sick room, and she, on calling to see her daughter, was directed where to find her. Miss Flint was heavily dosing, and the women, though with precaution, *as they say*, talked of poor Lady Maclairn's illness, and the melancholy news from Jamaica. The visitor had heard the report, which has circulated here, and which a London newspaper has communicated to the public. Namely, that, " Mr. Flamall was assassinated by a negro, whom he had too severely treated." I suspect the precaution of whispering this tale was forgotten, in the eagerness of curiosity and the love of the marvellous. Suddenly, they were alarmed by a faint scream from the sick woman, who, with convulsive groans and agitations, said, " dead! murdered! lost! for ever lost! Flamall!" Screams followed this apostrophe, and the

terrified girl ran to Miss Cowley's room. She was unfortunately sleeping on the sopha, after having passed the greater part of the night by Lady Maclairn's bed side. She rose with firmness, to perform the duty to which she was summoned; not permitting Mrs. Allen to be informed of what was passing; because she was with Lady Maclairn. I found her calm and collected; sitting by the dying Miss Flint, whose senses were lost before she ceased to breathe. Let me finish this melancholy detail, by saying, that I did not quit Miss Cowley's bed side for the space of six and thirty hours. Heaven was merciful! and she will be restored to health. But we must have no beloved friends to greet at present.

I quit you to obey the summons of my *precious* patient. She insists upon signing this bulletin. She will soon be well; for she is growing saucy, and this morning, at four o'clock, when I carried her the

prescribed potion, she told me "that in my night cap and gown, I was the very image of Blue Beard; and still more savage than he; for, that his scymitar was nothing in comparison with my glass of poison." Judge with what contentment of mind I now sign the name of your sincere

ARCHIBALD DOUGLASS.

P. S. Indeed, my dear Lucy, I am getting well. They tell me, the wind is still against the Lisbon packet's sailing. How fortunate I am! There! the whole junto are rising! and the inkstand has vanished. Your's! your own R. Cowley is, indeed, only too weak to mutiny against this authority.

LETTER LXX.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

IT is with gratitude to Heaven, that I find my dear friends at Heathcot, are relieved from their too tender anxieties and apprehensions on my account, yet wherefore do I say "too tender," I recall the words, my Lucy, which my heart does not sanction, and I will not assume a virtue I have not; I give you joy, that death has spared to you your Rachel Cowley. I rejoice in your love; and I participate in your present feelings. Your goodness to Horace has contributed towards my restoration. I should have died, had you mentioned your terrors to him.

I have written to him the state of affairs here. He will be satisfied, that the recent

events, in which I have been engaged, occasioned the brevity of my letter.

Mrs. Heartley sends her love to you with the enclosed: she insists, that you will be better pleased with it, than with *my labours*. They have, amongst them, annihilated the self will of your

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER LXXI.

From Mr. Serge to Mrs. Heartley.

(Enclosed in the preceding.)

MADAM, *Putney.*

I make no doubt, but that you have heard Mr. Maclairn mention his friend Jeremiah Serge; and that you are con-

vinced, I mean to deserve my title. I shall, therefore, enter into the business before us at once. Herewith you will receive the deeds, which secure to your daughter and her children the estate called the Wenland Farm, now occupied by Malcolm Maclairn; the day she becomes that gentleman's wife, he is her tenant and his children's steward. Counsellor Steadman has managed this affair for me, to my entire satisfaction, and I trust it will not be less so to my young friend.

I have, for the first time, during many long weeks, felt that the Almighty has yet the means in his hands with which to heal my wounds. I never, Mrs. Heartley, had a son; I have not, like Sir Murdoch, had a son like his Malcolm, to follow me in my feeble steps, with duty and affection; nor try to perpetuate my name, and his own virtues to children unborn; but I had a child, who was, whilst she lived, the joy and the prop of my life!

But you know what I have had to suffer! I am forgetting the object of this letter.

From the first hour I knew Mr. Malcolm Maclairn, I took a liking to him; this goodwill was, in part, owing to the favourable character I had of him from my excellent friend, Counsellor Steadman. Some particulars I learned from this gentleman, led me to think that it was in my power to serve this worthy young man: and with this intention, and *other thoughts* in my mind, I paid my visit to Farefield Hall. I was in part disappointed in my scheme; but I saw the young man was *all*, and *more*, than I expected, and I gave him my heart, though I could not give him my daughter's hand. I thought I had explained myself to his good father, in regard to my views in assisting the son; but I perceived, that Sir Murdoch had a little of the infirmity, which is common to men of high birth; so I consulted the

counsellor, and did what I could without offending the baronet's high spirit.

Believing that you are a very judicious lady, I request from you the favour, in case you should see the good baronet's scruples, to say what, in truth, you may affirm, that you perceive nothing in my conduct, that ought either to offend, or surprise him.

Some men, with less wealth than I possess, keep fine houses, fine madams, and fine horses; buy fine pictures, and plant fine gardens. Now, Mrs. Heartley, I have no taste nor pleasure in these things; seeing I was not brought up to like, or understand them; but this is no reason why my money should be useless to me, and if I can purchase, by my superfluity, the happiness of having such a friend as Malcolm Maclairn, I should be a fool not to have done what I have done. So, heartily wishing the young couple happy,

and recommending to your fair daughter to marry her tenant directly,

I remain, your sincere,

JEREMIAH SERGE.

LETTER LXXII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

January 12.

MY patience is recompensed. "I may write half an hour, seeing that scribbling is the aliment some girls live upon." This is my kind doctor, Lucy; and if you had seen how grateful I was for this indulgence, you would be of Mrs. Heartley's opinion, who has pronounced my fever *good for something*; for that it has

saved Lady Maclaira's life; and, as you may perceive, has taught me to submit. Blessed be God for the renewal of that life, which is so dear to my friends; and which I may, if it be not my fault, still render a blessing to them and myself.

We are once more in sight of the harbour of peace; not indeed of that peace which "this world can neither give nor take away," but of that season of tranquillity, which, in mercy, is allotted to man, in order, as it should seem, to give us time to refit our feeble bark, and to rectify the chart, to which we have hitherto trusted; to recover by repose, strength and vigour for the storms and perils we may yet have to encounter in our passage to eternity; and to leave behind us traces of that providential power which hath piloted us home.

You will like to have the particulars of Miss Flint's will. It will satisfy you, as it has done me, that a death-bed repent-

ance is *much better than none.* She specifies, that, in consideration of her brother Oliver's donation to Philip Flint, it appears to be an incumbent duty on her part, to provide for those of her family, who have been *too long neglected*, and to the last moment of her mortal life, will she bless Philip Flint, for having seconded her in this act of justice, by his advice and concurrence.

The Fairfield estate, with the moveables, besides a considerable sum in money, which will devolve on him as residuary legatee, are left to Captain Flint for his life; at his decease they go to Philip Flint, to whom she has only bequeathed five thousand pounds "as a token of her love." To her niece Mary the same sum, payable when she is of age, and five *more* at her uncle's decease. To Malcolm Maclairn two thousand pounds, "as a *mark* of her esteem for him, and gratitude to his mother." By the way, poor Malcolm

was nearly overpowered by this *mark*, for he had not mourned as one who needed comfort; and I suspect that his conscience was not quite prepared for the legacy.

To the poor of the parish she has left a liberal peace offering: to her servants she has been generous and just: to Warner, her woman, she leaves a thousand pounds.

Flamall's execrable name does not appear in any paper that is left; and yet the contents of the cabinet left to Lady Maclairn's inspection, clearly prove that Miss Flint had long been engaged by the thoughts of death. Not a *friend* has been overlooked but Flamall, and it is evident to me, that she ceased to regard him even in that point of view, from the time he declared his marriage. I suspect she was informed of his baseness in that business. All her little donations were marked and ticketed by her own hand. To Sir Murdoch she leaves a very fine seal; its antiquity as well as beauty, make it valuable.

To Mrs. Allen a gold snuff box, containing an hundred pound bank note, "for mourning;" for Miss Cowley a diamond ring. To each of Douglass's boys a hundred guineas for books, and three hundred pounds in notes, for their worthy father. A small box, directed "to my niece, Mary Howard, as a token of my too late repentance and unfeigned love." The captain, who was present when her ladyship performed this painful office, was so much affected by the sight of this box, that he burst into tears, and, with extreme agitation, tore off the address, and put it in his bosom. Philip Flint had not been overlooked in this partition of kindness. Her picture in miniature, taken at the time he was born, with a rich string of pearls that had been her mother's, were marked for him and his wife. We have since examined Mary's gift. Some fine lace, and a few family jewels are the principal things. When you have cautiously

informed her, that, from her aunt's hands, she has restored to her what she will judge to be *invaluable*, namely, her father's and mother's pictures, so long lost! so deeply regretted! But I am called to order; and you will be contented with this four day's labour of your poor shackled Rachel Cowley; who is bound, though in silken fetters. You know that the Heartleys are here. I gain nothing by that; for they are as bad as any of my argus-eyed nurses.

P. S. My dear Miss Hardcastle, we have now only to fear that our patient should be *too soon* well. She has no fever, but that which arises from her exertions. She cannot *vegetate*, to use her own word; and she thinks her body is strong, because her mind is never idle. It is in vain that we oppose her. She will write; and then who can wonder that she does not sleep! Use your

influence, and give us time to recruit her strength.

Yours,

A. HEARTLEY.

Mrs. Allen is in good spirits. She has left me nothing to say in regard to Doctor Douglass. But, I verily believe, his care saved the life of our precious friend. She was, indeed, for some hours, so ill as to leave little for hope. I leave Alice to express, to my dear Mary, all that my full heart feels on her account.

CHAP. XII.

LETTER LXXIII.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

January 29.

ALTHOUGH in the calculation of months and weeks, I have contrived to beguile the lagging hours which are still between me and my promised bliss, I have not yet been able to find an expedient for the day, without scribbling to you. It seems to be the aliment necessary for my existence; and notwithstanding I could match an hungry school boy, in my appetite for my pudding, I could sooner console myself for the absence of my dinner, than of the use of my right hand, as

the agent of my fondest, sweetest employment. I have written a volume to Horace; and he will know as much of the occurences at Farefield, as will content him. He will know that I am in health and in hope. Say not a word of my having been so ill. The old bard says, "men are deceivers ever." A woman therefore, may *for once deceive*, when in that deceit, she spares to a beloved object the useless anxiety arising from past danger and past pains.

Yesterday our "busy-heads" went to Wenland-place, in order to give their opinion of certain alterations and improvments projected by the new tenant Malcolm. I was ordered to stay at home by my despotical doctor, and Lady Maclairn promised to take *good* care of me.

They departed after breakfast, meaning to dine at Mr. Wilson's, and left us to a danger, as bad as cold rooms. I soon found it impossible to evade the topic I so much dreaded for her; she at once

led to the subject by saying, that she had still secrets to communicate to her only comforter, but that she feared my sensibility. I desired her to proceed. "Some time before my sister's death," continued she, "I received this sealed parcel from her hands. It is, as you see, addressed to myself. I hesitated when she offered it to my acceptance. She observed my reluctance." "Make yourself perfectly easy," said Miss Flint, "it contains nothing but papers essentially necessary for your future security. I cannot die, without telling you that they are *necessary*. You do not know your brother, Harriet, so well as I do; and I must tell you, what steps I have taken to secure you from his future tyranical power. I shall die, however, without bitterness of spirit. I once loved Flamall; I do not accuse him here; nor will I accuse him *hereafter*; for my own envy, my own implacable spirit, my own stubborn and hard heart prepared the way for the influence of his inordinate

purposes, and more deliberate mischiefs. As a father, he has been equally base and cruel. Philip has informed me of the measures he pursued, in order to gratify his ambition in regard to his son's marriage with Miss Cowley. Let it suffice, that they were such as did not surprise me. I immediately wrote to Mr. Flamall. You will find a copy of my letter amongst those papers. He knows, that I have, by a full and ample confession of my crimes, so implicated them with those which he has committed, as must ruin him in this world, if discovered; and as inevitably destroy his hopes of a better, if he do not repent. Should he ever dare to disturb the comforts of my son, by a declaration of his real affinity to him; should he ever dare farther to invade on your peace; he knows what must be the consequence. Actions, which will be recognisable in a court of justice, will determine his fate, and crush with ignominy his worthy and unoffending

child. Obdurate as he is in sin, nature is not extinguished in his bosom. He loves his son, and, I am certain, would sooner die himself, than see him disgraced in the world: time may soften to him his present disappointment. I have urged to Philip every possible measure, in order to effect a reconciliation between him and his *uncle* Flamall. He may, if he be wise, live on good terms with his son, and if he be not lost to conscience, he may find employment, for his remaining term of grace." "You weep, my dear Harriet," continued my poor Lucretia; I cannot. How many bitter tears of yours will swell my account; for I was born for your sorrow! and the ruin of the innocent! Can you give comfort to the broken and contrite of heart? Can you say you forgive me? "As freely," answered I eagerly, "as I hope for mercy and pardon. I have also sinned, I have also erred." "Yes," replied she, with quickness; "but the snare

was laid for you; and you only stumbled. I boldly invited the danger, and made an acquaintance with guilt and perfidy; see to what purpose! to languish with a mother's yearnings, to behold and bless that child, who would shrink from me as a monster, did he know me; to dread the future, and to mourn, too late, the wretchedness annexed to a life of guilt. Promise me," added she, "to be still my Philip's mother. Let me die in the hope, that you will never forego the title." "Never," answered I, sensible only to her condition, "never, whilst it depends on me to preserve it; he is mine in affection, and nothing can cancel his rights to my love." "May Heaven reward you," exclaimed she, in an agony. "May that child's children bless and revere you——My poor boy will not be surprised at the tenor of my last will," continued she thoughtfully. "He is rich; and I have explained my intentions, in regard to my brother and

Mary. It required very few arguments to prove, that they had not been justly treated. But let me not think of their wrongs! I wrote him word, that it was essentially necessary to my peace to consider them. His last letter was a cordial to my sinking soul; he urges me even to omit his name, if it interfered with my kind purposes; that he possessed *more* than he wanted of the goods of fortune. Judge, adds he, when I tell you that my brother has frequently realized fourteen thousand pounds annually from his estates: Judge whether, my dear, I may say maternal friend and sister, needs bequeath me more *than her blessing and her love.*" "I wear at my heart this precious letter," added she, taking it from her bosom; "but you must take it with the papers. His picture may yet remain; I mean it should moulder into dust with me"—She paused—"I think," pursued she, as though collecting herself, "that I may hope to stand ac-

quitted before my Maker for the last and only compensation I can make to some, whom I have injured; perhaps *strict* justice would exact more *sacrifices*. But I am a mother, Harriet; the guilty mother, of an innocent child, now a worthy member of society. Something is surely due to him; and thy merciful Maker will not weigh this consideration in the balance of offended justice. Such has been my state of mind for some time past, that had it not been for Philip, I would have fearlessly met every stigma with which this world could have branded me, for the hopes of meeting with a reconciled God. It becomes not me to say, that I think, in this instance of my conduct, I have acted right. But conscience has at least been my guide; I have done for the best. Will not that prudence, which will protect the honour of your family, and the happiness of mine, sanction your secresy in regard to the birth of thy poor——!" She could

not go on. Again I soothed her to composure, I solemnly repeated my promise, my dear Miss Cowley, that I would preserve our secret from every danger of a disclosure. "This engagement now distresses me," continued Lady Maclairn, "I fear I have been wrong; but what could I do, in a moment of such difficulty? I was unequal to the trial; I could not see her die miserable."—

I placed before Lady Maclairn the wonderful interference of Providence, which had removed the guilty, to secure the innocent. I urged to her the purity of her intentions, and the humanity which pointed out to her the line of conduct she had pursued, and had engaged to pursue. "Repose on your merciful Maker," added I, "for an acquitttal, where you mean to do for the best; patiently wait the end, when this darkness shall be removed; and you will, I trust, find, that having lived to promote the happiness of others, to

have contributed to the comfort and security of your family has not been to live in vain. Be assured, my dear friend, that your sufferings will have their place with a Being "who knoweth what is in man; and with a Father, who loveth his children, you may reasonably hope for acceptance and favour." "You are my comforter," replied she, meekly raising her eyes to Heaven; "I have not outlived this first of all human hopes. My weakness, not my will, has betrayed me from the paths of rectitude. But it is difficult for me, to conceal my feelings. I dare not even break the seal, which confines my knowledge to what I already know of the wretched life and conduct of my brother; I sometimes think I shall lose my senses, in reflecting on his end, and the enormities of his conduct. Oh, it is dreadful, Miss Cowley, to follow him to that tribunal before which he must appear!—— Leave me for a while," added she, sobbing,

"leave me to my God, to my Almighty supporter"——I obeyed, too much affected to resist. I took the papers with me. She has acted prudently in not reading them. She begs they may be forwarded to you, and that the whole transaction may remain in your hands. You are allowed to read them. What will you say to the letter marked No. 4? The one she burned was the answer to it; but I dare not pursue this horrid subject. My eyes would betray me, and the doctor would be angry; for he has made me promise not to harrass my spirits, and to check my friend's sorrows. I am going to her! and we will be wise. The return of the vagrants renders this necessary.

Yours,

RACHEL COWLEY.

P. S. Sedley will give you this.

LETTER LXXIV.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

AGAIN I am permitted to take a better cordial than bark. Mrs. Heartley has fully explained to us the mystery relative to the portraits in Miss Flint's possession. It appears that Mrs. Howard, apprehending that they would be more pernicious to her brother, than consolatory, requested Mrs. Heartley to secrete them from his search. She obeyed her dying friend. "But," added Mrs. Heartley, "my feelings at this juncture were nearly as little under the controul of my reason, as poor Percival's. I wrote a letter to Miss Flint, which was dictated by my sorrow, and the romantic hope of touching her heart in favour of a child whom she had contributed to render

an *orphan* and a *beggar*. I enclosed these powerful pleaders," continued Mrs. Heartley, taking up the miniatures, and surveying them with emotion, "and my language was not less forcible. Malcolm was employed to place my packet in her hands. He effected his purpose; for she found it on her dressing table. The next morning he was questioned, and he frankly owned, that he had, at my request, placed the parcel where she had found it. You have been faithful, Sir, in the performance of your commission, said Miss Flint, trembling and pale with fury; "be so in delivering my message *to your Mrs. Heartley*. Tell her, that her insolent and officious interference has failed, and that whilst Miss Flint's family have no better advocates than a kept mistress, she wants no apology for renouncing it." Malcolm bluntly told her, that she must employ some one to deliver such a message who had never heard of Mrs. Heartley; for

himself, he begged leave to decline insulting his best friend." I heard no more from Miss Flint; and I concluded that she had destroyed the portraits in a similar manner as she had that of her mother. Frustrated in my project, I was forced to conceal this occurrence; and the pictures were supposed to be irrecoverably and unaccountably lost."

Although my conscience reproached me frequently when hearing the captain bewail this loss, it never did so as to the motive from which I had acted: but it is to be feared, that my zeal in the cause of the injured, disqualified me for making a convert to justice and humanity. It is most probable that I irritated where I wished to heal; and it is certain, that I was from that time the object of Miss Flint's implacable resentment. Poor woman!" continued Mrs. Heartley, with compassion, "she was then under the miserable yoke of those passions, which

although they *govern*, cannot *blind us*. Neither her spirit of resentment, nor any entrenchment from her prosperous fortune, could shield her from the voice within her bosom. It spoke my language with tenfold energy, and she hated me, because she knew I was in unison with her conscience. She shunned me, as she would have shunned *that*, had she been able. Is it not unaccountable," added Mrs. Heartley, addressing me, "that any rational being should fear to encounter the eyes of a fellow creature under the circumstances of guilt, nay, even of folly, without considering the power of conscience, from whose suggestions this very dread arises. That Miss Flint was sensible of its power is certain. Nor do I believe, with some, that it is possible for us to outlive its authority. When I hear of such, who are said to be hardened by sin, and become callous by guilt, I no more believe it, than I do those tales I hear

of the elixir for perpetuating our existence here for ever. I am convinced that God will not be mocked by the creatures of his power, and I have only to follow the bold and impious offender of his laws to his hours of privacy, to learn, that he cannot evade that Being's presence, whose commands he insults." I was more disposed to shorten this conversation, than to dispute the truths it contained. Lady Maclairn's conscience wants no stimulants. Douglass entered, and we became cheerful. You love the doctor, you say; prithee who does not? but no one shall love him so well as Horace. You have heard of his gallantry three or four nights he past in my antichamber!

RACHEL COWLEY.

LETTER LXXV.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

I AM, my dear friend, so powerfully impressed by the perusal of Miss Flint's *confession*, as her legacy to Lady Maclairn may with truth be called, that I cannot divert my mind from the subject. What a scene of iniquity have I sent you! and how rejoiced am I, that I prevailed on Lady Maclairn not to tear open those wounds afresh by reading a detailed account of actions and artifices which her brother employed to defraud Mr. Flint's children of their rights. Surely, my Lucy, the death of Flamall was "a consummation devoutly to be wished." To be removed from the indignation of the injured, to be spared from the abhorrence

of the virtuous; to be saved from the constant dread of living an object amenable to the most vigorous laws of his country; to be freed from the horrors of his dying bed! But how momentary is this delusion of feeling! My reason and my faith point out this disembodied spirit in its next state of existence. With trembling awe I follow it to the tribunal of an all-wise, omnipotent, and pure Judge. There do I contemplate this forlorn and sullied soul, as rushing uncalled into the presence of that Being, whose merciful purposes he has counteracted; and whose laws he has insulted. Nature stands appalled, at the magnitude of offences like these; and humanity must deplore the sinner thus cut off in the midst of his sins."

I cannot however help being of opinion that, useful as the contemplation of a Flamall's life may be to beings who fearlessly follow the impulse of every disorder-

ly passion, *we*, my beloved Lucy, shall not be unwise, to direct our thoughts from such shocking depravity of creatures like ourselves. I wish so to do; and yet not lose the lesson of wisdom as applicable to myself. In what, I would ask you, consisted the difference between Miss Flint and Rachel Cowley at two years of age. The general lineaments of our minds have a near affinity. What has produced the moral differences which from that period have discriminated us? Education, and the habits resulting from our respective situations: in the one instance, the soil was left uncultured; in the other, it was judiciously cultivated. Lucretia had been overlooked by her mother in the early period of her life. Indolence and indulgence were this mother's faults. She found, in cultivating the docile and mild Percival, a gratification of her own taste, and an object of amusement, as well as for exclusive tenderness

This mother wanted firmness, and the vigilance necessary for her duty. When passion had taken its root, this unhappy creature was consigned over to the care and tuition of a schoolmistress. I mean not to be illiberal; for I believe many women in that class of life are not only accomplished women, but conscientiously disposed to be useful to their pupils; but I cannot think that in a large school, either the temper, or peculiar moral defects of a girl are likely to meet with that nice and accurate observation which are necessary for their correction. I will however admit that in this seminary Miss Flint acquired the outward habits of decorum, and that knowledge, which, with experience, and a different temper, might have conducted her, as it does multitudes of our sex, in the common routine of private and domestic life. She then returned to her parents, slenderly furnished by the gifts of nature, with a spirit unsubdued;

and a mind without any fixed principle of action, beyond a confidence in herself. She was next a candidate for favour in the world; and she proudly conceived that no one would dare refuse it; but she found a rival, even in the cradle, and under the parental roof. Is it to be expected, that from such a disposition, and under such circumstances, envy and malice could be long a stranger to her? The mother perceived their baneful influence; and she opposed to their growth, nothing but remedies which relieved herself from trouble and vexation. She *flattered* instead of *reproving*, and gave to her daughter an authority which she knew she would abuse. Uncontrouled and domineering over those about her; irritated by the neglect of those whom she could not subjugate to her imperious will, she became soured, disappointed, and vindictive; and she finished by becoming the fit instrument in the hands of a Flamall, for the ruin of

the innocent, and the perpetration of injustice, cruelty, and deceit.

Thus have we seen the fatal torrent of unchecked passions flow! but suppose this wretched victim of their fury had been in Mrs. Hardcastle's hands. Oh Lucy, we want no supposition! We have seen a *torrent*, not less impetuous, directed by her wisdom, to the salutary purposes for which Heaven gave it strength and abundance; and instead of desolating all within its reach, it has been led to supply delight, and satisfaction! How often has her patient firmness subdued my angry passions? How often has she detected them before I knew their power! With what skill did she temper and mix the warm affections of my nature with the rougher elements which composed me. How sweet, how endearing was her notice of every little triumph I gained over myself; and with what discrimination did she effect that bond of love, which made her

children useful to each other. Her Lucy's gentleness was opposed to her Rachel's *courage*; and Horace's self-command was the only point to which emulation was recommended. Is it wonderful, that I have escaped the fate of a Miss Flint? Is it wonderful that I should love virtue, and reverence a faith thus exemplified? No, Lucy. But I have to fear, lest I should disgrace Mrs. Hardcastle. We may, and I hope we shall, live to be wives and mothers. Let us in that case, aim at being something better than mere teeming animals; and like some in that class, who, following their instinct, squeeze their offspring to death through fondness. I am persuaded that we are weak and fallible creatures; but I cannot for an instant admit, that an all-wise and merciful Being has exacted any *one duty*, or enforced any *one command*, without having bestowed upon us the faculties and capacity for fulfilling our obligations. Every mother whose

mind is sound, is called upon to perform the duties of a mother; and without any better guide than her own reason and attention, she will soon perceive that something more is required, than merely watching over the preservation of her children. I am, and I wish to remain, a stranger to that humility which represses, as beyond me, all that is arduous and praise-worthy. I believe, that by applying my heart to wisdom, I may become wise; and the mother who diligently watches over the first openings of moral existence in the beings entrusted to her, will soon discover, that she has the necessary talents for governing them safely. Attention and experience will enlighten her; and should she never reach to the accomplishment of all she wishes, she will at least secure to herself the favour of God, and her own peace of mind. It pleases me, my Lucy, to look forward to that period, when, with the name of Hardcastle, I may be treading

in the same path of duty which our mother pursued in her road to Heaven. Will you wish me to suppress my hopes, that I may one day be able, with the pure joy of an accepted spirit in her abode of bliss, to point to her those inmates, whom her virtues trained for happiness? Yet why this tear? I cannot erase the blot it has made. Wherefore is it that my spirit faints? You must come and chide me; you will find me paler and thinner than when I last saw you; and, it may be, less the heroine, since there has been less to oppose me. But I hate *sea voyages!*

Oh sweet Valentine! hasten to us! hasten and bring to me my Lucy! thou shalt then be crowned as the harbinger of spring and Horace. Tell my "lily," that we expect no tears nor sighs. She is desired to wear the same face she did with her *lilac ribbands*. We are all learning to be philosophers, except Malcolm, who is daily in danger of losing his good humour;

and rates the work people for not being at Wenland, at the same time that they are here. I believe in my conscience that Miss Hardcastle and Miss Howard might sleep in the stable for him. But we do not mind his *pouting*; and your apartment, which was Miss Flint's, is to be made worthy of the captain's guests. Adieu, my dear girl; the good people here send their blessings with

RACHEL COWLEY'S.

CHAP. XIII.

LETTER LXXVI.

From Miss Cowley to Miss Hardcastle.

January 24.

MY dear Lucy will not expect to find me in the broad road of folly and laughter, with so many admonitions of wisdom as I have of late been favoured with; I repeat the word *favoured*; for poor and weak must be the mind which does not profit from such lessons as I have had to study! Do not, however, take the alarm; I hope, I shall escape dullness, although I am become somewhat graver than in the days of

my flippancy, and *rude* health. My poor Horace! But I dare not trust myself with the subject! But is it not wonderful that no one can be found to comfort the Earl of S——, but his son's friend, whose heart is pierced with an anguish as bitter and acute as his own! I am selfish, I am ashamed to tell you that I am become fretful and nervous. You must come, my Lucy; I want you to sustain and to chide me. My spirits are weakened, and my mind is assailed by apprehensions which I dare not give to you. This news from Lisbon has been hurtful to me. I send you enclosed a letter which may make you smile: it did not move a muscle in my face. Lady Maclairn undertook to reply to it for me. She was obliged to answer a letter of condolence which Mrs. Serge thought it polite to send to her "dear cousin." I believe her ladyship hazarded to give her correspondent a little wholesome advice, which will be well for her

if she understands its value. Mrs. Heartley has received letters from her son Henry; he is coming home. His friend's death, with his dying advice to the young man, make only a part of those motives which induce Henry to quit his present situation. Mr. Bembridge, the deceased, has left him an estate in Berkshire of three hundred pounds *per annum*; and Henry wisely thinks, that with this provision and Mary Howard, he shall be as rich as a Nabob, with a ruined constitution, and twenty lacks of rupees. "He will have letters before he embarks, which will dash from his lips this cup of happiness," observed the anxious mother. "Miss Howard is now in a very different situation from that, under which my poor boy vowed to live, and to labour for her. I would not on any account have the captain made acquainted with my son's hopes. He thinks Henry is right to return home; but I now wish him to remain where he is for a few

years." "Leave him to Providence," replied I, "and enjoy the blessings before you. Alice will be soon happy, and who knows whether one wedding may not be followed by another? a little money will not spoil Mary Howard, or change Captain Flint's nature." "I shall take care," observed she thoughtfully, "to prevent Henry from coming hither; I wish Alice were settled, I should immediately go to town, and wait there for my son's arrival." Cannot you, Lucy, find out whether Mary's *colour* is yet *lilac*. Alice thinks it is; but we may be conjecturing on false grounds; for Alice Heartley and Rachel Cowley are very simple girls; yet I do believe the captain wishes to see Henry united to him by the tenderest ties. He even proposed the other day to Malcolm to wait for his brother's arrival before he married. Malcolm smiled; but declined the advice.

You saw enough of our doctor, when you were at Farefield, to enter into the spirit of my allusion, when I call him the sun which cheers us. We may say with truth that we live in his smiles. Should you fancy this expression too poetical to suit with Douglass's stern face, it is because you have not seen him when with a patient who he thinks wants comfort more than medicine. Did they inform you that he never quitted my room during six and thirty hours? Horace will love him, Lucy, and you will be grateful. Amongst other ingenious hypotheses which he maintained this morning was one that will please you; for he proved to demonstration that Miss Cowley "had the strength of a horse." He has been scolding me for this last hour; and has provoked me to laugh at him and myself.

Oh! how tedious are the hours till I hear from you. Mrs. Allen sends her good wishes with your

RACHEL COWLEY'S.

P. S. I am well, quite well, Lucy! my cordial in my bosom! Do not mind a word in this letter. Douglass will triumph. He predicted how it would be; when the wind blew propitiously.

LETTER LXXVII.

From Mrs. Serge to Miss Cowley.

My Dear Miss Cowley,

IT would give me inexpressible concern, could I for a moment believe that you "himagine" I have forgotten you, or the promise I made you, when at Farefield Hall. You can be no stranger to the "hevents" which have taken place in my family since that time; and of course these

will account to you for my "happarent" neglect. I have endeavoured to practise what I preach, which is more, as Mrs. Dangle says, than *manny* who are paid for preaching do; for, as I have said in my letter to Lady Maclairn, I see that nothing good comes from sorrowing for those who are removed from this world. Death is appointed for all; and the best thing we can do is to submit to the loss of our friends and relations, who are summoned away before us. I dare say the death of Mr. Flamall has made her ladyship very unhappy, but time will restore her spirits, unless she do as my Jerry "*do*," yield to grief, and mope in her room. My kind friend, Mrs. Dangle, would not permit me to remain at Putney, where it was impossible I could have recovered my spirits. She has a charming house in the Haymarket; and since I have been her guest, I am much better; and indeed should be quite well, were it not for the vexation

Nora "give" me. You will be quite astonished to see the *halteration* a few months of matrimony "have" made in her; and it will give you a dread of love matches! But I would not discourage you. Nora "have" only to thank herself for all that "have" happened to disturb her. Captain Fairly is not to blame, because his wife is jealous; nor Mrs. Dangle, because her constant good humour "make" her the favourite with *hevery* gentleman. But Nora was always perverse in her temper! she can be heasy no where now, but at Putney. When single, she detested the place. She have been very ill; and her disappointment have perhaps made her lower in spirits; but, as I tell her, "the worse luck now, the better in future." She may have children enow by the time she is forty.

I hope, my dear Miss Cowley, nothing will prevent your visit to me in February. Captain Fairly has, very politely, offered to be your escort, and desires me to assure

you, that he will, with the utmost pleasure, come to Farefield to fetch you, if you will permit him to have that honour; but I conclude you will not be allowed to leave Mrs. Allen behind you; so that you will *happoint* the captain to meet you on the road. I shall be very happy to see Mrs. Allen. She will be nice company for Mr. Serge, in our absence. I promise you, nothing shall be omitted for your amusement. Mrs. Dangle is quite in polite life; and she engages to "hintroduce" you every where. You will meet the best company at her table; for her husband is never happy without society. There is a Major Ogle in love with you only from description. He says, that I have entangled his heart, and that he must be our shadow; therefore, we shall not want for a beau, nor one that half the women in London are dying for.

I would advise you not to make up anything when you are for your journey; it

would be only so much labour lost. But it may not be amiss for you to begin to accustom yourself to fewer petticoats. We wear here only one. But we have found out ways and means to obviate the mischief of going unclothed, and we contrive to keep ourselves warm; but this, as Mrs. Dangle says, is a secret *haunter mi*; for if the gentlemen knew you were in the habit of wearing small clothes whilst single, they might fear for their privileges when you married. You will be delighted with this charming woman. She is the counter-part of you, only she has seen more of polite life, since her marriage, than you have been in the way of seeing at Farefield; which, to say the truth, is a sad place for such a young lady as Miss Cowley.

I remain in the expectation of hearing from you the time fixed for seeing you; and I shall be impatient till I can show you that I am your affectionate friend,

LYDIA SERGE.

P. S. You need not be under any fear of meeting that disgrace to me, Lydia. I have not seen her since her leaving Putney, nor will I ever again *hacknowledge* her as my child. Jerry may be as obstinate as he please. So will I, on this point. You will be astonished to hear, that he have set up the feller who married her like a gentleman, and even sent down a post-chay for his lady's use. I see into this malice. It is all done to spite the captain, whom he hate. I am sorry to say, Nora's foolish complaints have done no good. I am sure, I can see nothing in the captain that would not please any reasonable woman; and to me, his behaviour is always *hattentive* and *respectful*. You need not shew this letter to my cousin; Sir Murdoch have made her quite a *methodist*.

What a shocking end Flamall have made! But he was always as proud as Lucifer.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

HAVING faithfully performed my pleasing task, and exerted my best abilities to recommend myself to my readers, I do honestly confess, that I am gratified by finding that something remains, in which my services may be useful to their curiosity. Except two letters, from Miss Cowley to her correspondents at Heathcot, nothing appears of sufficient consequence to this work, they being confined solely to Miss Hardcastle's and Miss Howard's journey to Farefield; which they reached in the month of February.

It remains with me, consequently to supply a few pages to this, otherwise

abrupt conclusion of a work, already reprehensible in the critic's eye.

My readers may be able to recollect the name of Montrose, the early friend of Mr. Philip Flint, who, with his sister, the wife of Mr. Lindsey, shared in his confidence, with the truth and ardour of youthful zeal and friendship, during his progress to Miss Sinclair's heart.

To this gentleman am I at present indebted for a situation in life which I would not exchange for the most brilliant which this world has to give. For I am sheltered from "the proud man's contumely," and "the pang which the worthy of the unworthy takes." I was in my friend's hospitable house at the shocking termination of Mr. Flamall's life. This event produced many changes in favour of those, to whom he had been more obnoxious than useful. My brother Lindsey, was immediately placed in Mr. Flamall's office, as this regarded Miss Cowley's

property on the island; and Mr. Flint, with Counsellor Steadman's advice and concurrence, relieved her, by an appeal to Chancery, from the restrictive clauses in her father's will, they being her appointed guardians until she was of age.

In the mean time, I was judged capable of educating the young Cowley's. Their gentle and interesting mother had formed an intimacy with my sister Lindsey, during the time they resided under the same roof, at Mr. Dalrymple's; and to judge of the future by the present, these friends will never have but one and the same roof.

In the hours of confidence, which succeeded to their first acquaintance, Marian informed Mrs. Lindsey, of her motives for withdrawing from Mr. Flamall's authority and power, by quitting an abode she loved. He had importuned her with his passion even before Mr. Cowley's death; and she held him in abhorrence and terror. She made no doubt of the il-

legality of Mr. Cowley's will, he having repeatedly told her, that she would find a protector and a guardian for her sons in Mr. Oliver Flint; and from the moment she was informed of Mr. Flamall's authority, she determined never to lose sight of her children. Mr. Philip Flint befriended her, because Juba had told him that I was afraid of his uncle. Her entire concurrence in committing her children to my care; her confidence in my integrity, led her cheerfully to part with them, and we reached England in safety; where my trust was sanctioned by their expecting sister and maternal friend.

From that hour I have experienced the comforts of a home, endeared to me by all that can give zest to rational pleasure with an undepraved heart. Montrose was understood as a man to be trusted; although, to say the truth, my friends appear to be governed by motives, not un-

like Bassanio, when he decides on the casket.—

> " Thou meagre lead,
> Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught;
> Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence,
> And here I chuse."

In giving up to my discretion her correspondence with Miss Hardcastle, during her residence at Farefield, Mrs. Hardcastle added those occurrences which had taken place after the day which terminated " her captivity." " You will easily believe," said she smiling, " that Counsellor Steadman was as ready to resign the heiress, as I was to be rid of the plagues of heirship; but Alice was a wife before I left the hall; and, my dear Lady Maclairn was obliged to confess, that life has its blessings; and, that the human heart can never want an inlet to joy, until it has banished affection for others. She was right in saying this; and she knows, and feels it to be truth. Mary has neither

changed her *colours* nor her *mind* with her fortune, and her uncle prefers Henry Heartley to a rich baronet. We shall see these *true* lovers united," added she, "when at Farefield; and then Sir Murdoch and his lady, will quit the hall for Wenland Place; where, I confidently hope, they will find a home of uninterrupted repose.

"The Duke of S——," continued Mrs. Hardcastle, "finding that my Horace had enough of the good things of this world; and, well knowing, he had a recompence in store for himself in Heaven, contrived to be useful to Mr. Sedley, and by his *interest*, procured for him a valuable crown living; and with his *money* secured to him the parish, of which his uncle is the pastor, and he still the curate." "Such, Mr. Montrose," added she, with seriousness, "is the present state and condition of those persons, in whose happiness you are so interested, and in whose sorrows, you

have taken so lively a concern. If, as you say, the whole tissue of events before you have confirmed you in your belief of a retributive justice, it is well: as it is displayed in this scene of action, it may be useful to others; although I am of opinion, that not a day passes, that does not add to our conviction, that the sinner is taken in his own snare, and the virtuous kept from falling by a power beyond our finite reason. But as your intention and labour will have little aid from fiction, let your fidelity, as an historian, compensate for the absence of the marvellous. Do not omit to say, that Philip Flint and Malcolm Maclairn are brothers, whose hearts are not divided by the ocean which separates them. They live in hopes of being re-united; but Mr. Flint has inherited from his grandfather so strong a predilection in favour of the island of Jamaica, that it would not surprise me, if he remained there until he could man a ship.

with his own boys, and freight it with Sinclairs and Lindseys. I am not quite so solicitous on this subject, as Malcolm," added she, "we are happy *now* at Wenland place: besides, let us be content. I do not wish my deputy, your sister, to be deserted. She is kind and gentle to my numerous dependents; and *Lindsey* is the *sweetener* to the sugar he sends us. Heaven be praised," continued she, "Cowley's slaves are yet cherished as men, though unfortunate men! *But I hate the subject.*"

To these instructions I have paid due obedience; but I have passed some weeks at Farefield Hall since writing the above.

And I think it will be no matter of surprise, much less of censure, that I should indulge myself with a supernumerary page or two, for the sole purpose of paying my tribute of respect to a character so much distinguished by Miss Cowley, in her let-

ters to her friend. Mr. Serge was not forgotten by her, when she became Mrs. Hardcastle. "You will see my favourite when you go to Farefield, said she, "and you will judge of my hasty sketches of the most simple-hearted man who lives. Supported by the rectitude of his own mind, and a piety which rests solely on the goodness of God, he has sustained very severe trials, with a patience and resignation that ought to put philosophy to the blush. The loss of his favourite daughter, the prop of his comforts, was followed by the death of Mrs. Fairly, who, in consequence of a severe cold taken at a place of public amusement, to which she was reluctantly hurried, after an indisposition of a dangerous kind, fell into a rapid decline, and was consigned to the grave before she was one and twenty. Her, giddy, thoughtless mother was at this melancholy period on a tour of pleasure with Mrs. Dangle, recently become a widow; and Captain

Fairly, with another military beau were their escorts.

Poor Mr. Serge, assisted by his friends the Tomkins's, supported this scene, and without designing to write to his unfeeling son, or to his foolish misled wife, sheltered his sorrows at his daughter Mrs. Willet's, leaving to the public papers to announce to the travellers the event, which they might have foreseen before they left home. "But the claims of the disconsolate widow, Mrs. Dangle, could not be overlooked." Mr. Maclairn and his wife joined the dejected Mr. Serge at his daughter Willet's; and by diverting his thoughts to the final establishment of this child, they had the satisfaction of seeing him improve in health and spirits. He had not, however, lost his resentment in regard to his wife's desertion; but with firmness declared, that he meant to give up his house at Putney, and to live remote from London. With these resolutions he returned

to town; and it appears that he was steady. The lady returned also from her excursion, somewhat humbled by the reception he gave her; and probably, shocked by the death of her child, she made concessions which failed in their effect; for she would not submit to give up her dear Mrs. Dangle, nor refuse Captain Fairly's visits—points *obstinately* enforced by her husband. He again returned to Mrs. Willet's, and found consolation. His grandson amused him; and "honest William," as he calls Mr. Willet, hourly rose in his estimation. Some months passed: he resolutely refused to return home, without an assurance that he should find his wife willing to give up her son, Fairly, and Mrs. Dangle's society. But this poor, weak, and misguided woman, had too promptly acquired the lessons they had taught her; and she was hastening on to destruction, when an accident deprived her of life. A Major Ogle, who had his hopes and projects,

flattered by the age and vexations "of the rich old taylor," drove one morning Mrs. Serge an airing in his tandem from Dangle Park, leaving his friend the noble Captain Fairly to amuse Mrs. Dangle. Though a proficient in gallantry and gaming, the major could not manage two high fed and spirited horses. Some linen drying on a hedge by a cottage, frightened the leader; he became ungovernable, the carriage was overset, and Mrs. Serge received a blow on the temple from the horse's foot, which killed her on the spot; her admirer was quit with a broken arm. Mr. Serge received the intelligence of this shocking accident with silent sorrow: he took to his bed, and Malcolm was soon his nurse. "I have outlived my feelings!" said the poor man to him; "I dare not tell you what are my thoughts at this hour; but I sometimes think, it would be sinful to sorrow, for the loss of a woman, who, had she lived, would have lived only to have

disgraced herself. She is taken from the evil company of those who have perverted her simplicity, and made her the laugh of their dissolute hours. But the day will come, when they will remember having corrupted innocence, and misled ignorance: her cause, and mine will be heard at a tribunal, they will tremble to approach." He now determined on his plans for his future life, and with his usual munificence left his house and furniture at Putney for Mrs. Tomkins's use; and he has from that time resided at Mr. Wilson's, in Captain Flint's deserted apartments; where, in the comforts of a family attached to him, and in the society of Mrs. Heartley, who still lives at the Abbey, he is cheerful and contented. "When you know him," continued Mrs. Hardcastle, "it will not surprise you to find him, treated by his friends with an affectionate fondness, resembling that which is given to a cherished child; but although he

may be called the pest of every house he frequents, such is the genuine goodness of his nature, that indulgence cannot make him forward or capricious. He does not even claim the respect due to his age and station; and whilst the poor around him regard him as their tutelary divinity, they love him as a neighbour, and he converses with them like one. His loquacity will amuse you, for he may be said to think aloud; and his gratitude to those who, in his own words, "are kind to him," is displayed by the minutest attention to their ease. Though he greatly prefers an open carriage to a coach, he keeps one because his *ladies* want it in bad weather;" and Mrs. Wilson is not permitted to take cold when she goes to church, for he insists on using it as a *family convenience*."

My recommendations were too powerful to be overlooked by Mr. Serge. We we were intimate friends in an hour; and it has been a source both of satisfaction and curiosity to me, to profit from the frank-

ness and openness of a mind so uncommon. I have seen that the encroachments of age and natural infirmities may find a barrier, without the aid of philosophy, and that in a cheerful piety a man may find a safe refuge from the cold apathy and querulous temper of near fourscore years, without other aid than his Bible, and a good heart.

Our conversations are long, though desultory. He frequently, however, talks of his past sorrows and troubles. Speaking of his daughter, *Mrs. Fairly*, he observed, "that from the time she married, she resembled a poor unfledged bird, who had been ensnared within sight of the nest, and the wing which had cherished her." "Poor thing," added he, "she told me once that *her husband* had taught her to love me." I spoke of his satisfaction in regard to Mr. Willet, with whom Mr. Maclairn was so pleased. "Yes," replied he, "thank God, Lydia is the wife of an honest man. I do not wish him to be such

a gentleman as Fairly. Plain cloth suits me, Mr. Montrose: I have worn no other, since I was born; except the trimmings are, like Malcolm's, of pure gold, they are not ornamental in my opinion: tinsel may decorate a fool, and set off a knave, whilst it lasts; but it will be for a very little time. Mark what I tell you; Fairly will die in in a goal; and his wife, late Mrs. Dangle, will want bread, and pity into the bargain. But I forgive them; it is my duty; and like all my Master's burthens, easy; for what should I gain by being unforgiving?

The other day he with much jocularity asked me whether the witnessing so much of conjugal felicity had not put matrimony into my head? I replied, that, on the contrary, it would probably stamp me a batchelor for life. "How so," asked he, "Why," answered I, "I see that in this lottery of life, there are some capital prizes; but I am too poor to hazard any part of my fund of present happiness, lest I spend

my money for a blank, and I am become too ambitious to be contented with a petty prize." He laughed, warning me, that I might change my mind. "For such things do happen," continued he; "at your age I was in no hurry to marry, yet when turned of forty, I married, without consulting my register, or my reason. My good aunt who lived with me, perceived, I suppose, that I was thinking of changing my condition, and she was much pleased; recommending perpetually to my notice, a very worthy young woman of her acquaintance; but I know not how it fell out, after seeing two or three times my poor, artless, good humoured Lydia, I was not easy in my mind; and thought my aunt's favourite, Miss Welldon, looked of a fretful temper, and was of too ceremonious a turn for me, though she was comely, and only six and thirty, which certainly was a more suitable age for mine, and I might have been comfortable with her. I soon found that Lydia was too

young a wife for me," continued he, thoughtfully, "but I loved her, and I well knew what kindness would do with her. She was contented, and all was peace with us, till she was perverted by bad company. Whenever, you marry, Mr. Montrose, take care to know what company the lady keeps; much depends on that; and avoid a disproportion in years: there is hazard in trusting too much, in some cases."

He is very curious in his questions relative to my two pupils, who are his favourites. "It is all in good time yet," observed he, "but we must be careful not to neglect our blessings. My grandson, Jerry, is a fine boy, and little William very active and promising. Their mother is an excellent *nurse*, and Mrs. Maclairn was quite surprised at seeing her a notable housewife. She has been favoured, Mr. Montrose. There is a curate and his wife near them, that are invaluable to these young people; and I will take care

that their goodness shall not be lost. But poor Lydia must not be trusted with my boys too long. Happily she promises to be a "fruitful vine." So the nursing will be transferred. I mean to give my children a *good education*, Mr. Montrose. It shall not be my fault, if they lack knowledge. I cannot reproach myself with having wilfully neglected my duty; but with a more enlarged knowledge I might have performed it better, and shunned many errors in conduct. I have, of late, been of opinion, that I had, in common with other men better instructed, a capacity that might have been improved by learning; and I will tell you the reason for this seeming presumption," added he, suddenly stopping and facing me; "it is this: that, although I cannot talk, nor argue like you, and our friends within, yet I very often comprehend the drift of your discourse, and am entertained by your debates." Before I could make any answer to this observation, Mr. Hard-

castle called him, and reminded him of the dampness of the evening, adding, that he was waited for at the loo-table. He nodded in sign of obedience, and said to me, "you may think I am vain, but I must tell you, that I perceive what has brought *pam* into favour here; I see all the kindness of their good hearts! It is well for me that I know that my debts of gratitude will be discharged in full by One who is able to pay them." He entered the house, and with bustling cheerfulness claimed his privilege of sitting next Mrs. Hardcastle.

Should these touches of my pencil be judged injurious to a portrait already so faithfully delineated by a more skillful hand, I have only to request the censurer to place the mistake, and others as glaring, to my account, and to separate them from the labours of a copyist, whose sole merit is confined to a diligent and honest purpose; and whose simplicity of heart has, in the presence of the unlearned Mr.

Serge, a hundred times pronounced, that learning would not have added one line to his stature.

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."

It is now more than three years since my manuscript has been in my writing desk. Already has time shadowed off a portion of those vivid colours, with which my picture of Farefield Hall then glared. The death of Lady Maclairn this spring, has saddened every heart; whilst, from her dying lessons and calm resignation, have resulted a consolation which all have found useful. Sir Murdoch yielded to Mrs. Hardcastle's entreaties, to join her in London soon after this melancholy event. Again has she been to him the "angel of peace," and, with renewed health and spirits, he accompanied the family to Heathcot in June.

It is at Heathcot, according to Sir Murdoch's opinion, that Mrs. Hardcastle must be seen, in order to be justly viewed. I think as he does; for it is here, and here

only, that the vivacity and brilliancy of her mind, appear to yield to the satisfactions of her heart. She is always amiable; but *at Heathcot* she is more placid, more affectionate, and, to use her own words, "never from home."

I conceived, that this was the season for renewing my petition relative to her and Mr. Hardcastle's letters. I could not succeed. She saw that I was disappointed. "Be comforted," said she smiling; "I will, if you please, formally announce to the public, what will satisfy half your readers, as well as the best written love letters extant. I can assert, that Horace Hardcastle is still obstinate in error; and that he yet worships the idol formed by his own hand; an acquaintance with its defects, serves only to augment his attachment, for he pretends to find, even in these, grounds for his faith and motives for his love."

"But do you not see?" observed I, "how much my moral must lose in its

moral design, by the omission of such letters as yours and Mr. Hardcastle's? A passion built on so noble a basis!"—— She interrupted me. "Enough has appeared," said she, "to justify my preference and affection for my husband. My principle of conduct is at the service of my sex. The young cannot adopt a better. The moment they know, that every approach to vice and libertinism is contagious, they will shun them, however decorated; and when they know, that by marrying a fool, their own gold will be mingled with an alloy which must sink its value and obscure its brightness, they will be safe, and preserve a heart worthy of a good husband."

"I cannot help having my fears," said I, rising, somewhat discomfited, and taking up my manuscript. "It is so unlike the popular novels of the day."—— "What should you fear?" replied she, with eagerness. "Why, misses, in their teens

write novels and publish them. They make nothing of it." I laughed, and gravely wished, that I had their youth and attractions to plead for my folly and failures. "Nonsense," cried she, laughing in her turn, I was speaking of their *courage*, not of their performances. Imitate them, at least in your good opinion, of your own talents; and should you, like them, find you have over-rated your abilities, settle the business, like our friend Sancho Panza; and say, "que Sancho écüyer cru bien aussi vîte en Paradis, que Sancho gouverneur." My father, and the *mother of this family*, as you justly stile Mrs. Allen, wish you to print your work. They think your *secret* worth knowing, and we admire the skill and discretion, with which you have contrived to divulge it, with usefulness to all, and without wounding any. I bowed, and have obeyed.

FINIS.

NEW NOVELS, &c.

Just Published,

By W. EARLE,

At his Circulating Library, No 47, Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, and may be had of all other Booksellers in the Kingdom.

---

1. In 4 Volumes, 12mo. Price 16*s.* in Boards, Gondez, the Monk; an Interesting Romance of the Thirteenth Century, by W. H. Ireland, Author of the Abbess, and other celebrated Novels, Romances, Legends, &c. and of Vortigern and Rowena, Henry the Second, and other curious Manuscripts, attributed to Shakspeare.

2. In 3 Volumes, 12mo. Price 12*s.* in Boards, The Mad Dog; or Modern Manners, by a Lady of Fashion.

3. In 3 Volumes, 12mo. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* in Boards, Crimps and Characters, by Mrs. Pilkington, Author of Parental Duplicity, &c. &c.

4. Octavo, Price 2*s.* 6*d.*
A Concise History of the Present State of the Commerce of Great Britain, with the Continent of Europe, and with various Parts of the World. Translated from the German of Dr. Reinhard, Professor in the University of Gotingen, Knight of the Order of St. Joachim, &c. &c. with copious explanatory Notes, by J. W. Hucklebridge.

S. Rousseau, Printer,
Wood Street, Spa Fields.